

NOSTALGIA ILLUSTRATED

The Pleasures of the Past

JOE DI MAGGIO



MAE WEST:
If You Got It—
Flaunt It



AVA GARDNER



PLUS:
5 Ways To Beat Prohibition
Racing Bikes of the 20s
The Continuing Saga
of Nancy Drew
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ALL DOLLED UP

Do you remember what Fay Wray was wearing when King Kong fell in love with her? Or the attire of Nelson Eddy and Jeanette MacDonald as they sang their way into the sunset? Or the color of Ginger Rogers' ostrich feathers? If you can't recall these trivial details, perhaps Tom Tierney can help you jog your memory. Fashion illustrator Tierney, whose claim to fame includes a youthful fling at making costumes for the girl next door's Sonja Henie paper doll and winning \$5 coloring Janet Gaynor's wardrobe for *Seventh Heaven*, has come up with a creation called "Thirty from the 30s", a sort of do-it-yourself coloring book with paper dolls of 30 movie stars from the Golden Age of the silver screen. The dolls come complete with costumes from their famous movies, which can be conveniently colored-in to make it more challenging to the artistically inclined. Also included are quizzes on each of the 30 stars to keep the trivia buffs happy. The quizzes were made up by Malcolm Vance, an ardent film fan who can remember, among other things, the film where Nelson Eddy and Jeanette MacDonald sang "Virginia Ham and Eggs". (The film is *Maytime*, in case you don't know.) The costumes were gleaned from various movie stills and old copies of *Photoplay*.



THAT OLD TIME MUSIC

When the Wurlitzer Company announced last year that they would end production of juke boxes in the United States, the demand for those old music machines that graced soda fountains all over America for the past decades has skyrocketed—and so have their prices on the collector's market. Once selling for as little as \$100 a few years ago, innumerable Wurlitzers, Seeburgs, Packards and Rockolas now sell for as much as \$1000 in some areas. Although classic juke boxes such as the Wurlitzer 1015, which came complete with garish plastic "bubble tubes", have always been collector's items; the fact that Wurlitzers are no longer manufactured has made even the lesser known items an instant part of nostalgia. The most avid of collectors advertise in newspapers and haunt antique stores for machines that are still in good working condition, old 78 rpm records can be found at garage sales or stashed away in some closet just waiting to be played. As for the reasons why some people would spend so much time and money on an expensive hobby like this, one collector explained, referring to his 1930s Wurlitzer, "This was the model I learned to jitterbug to."

STICKY SITUATION

The penny gumball seems destined to go the way of the dime novel and the nickel candy bar. Due to the skyrocketing cost of sugar, manufacturers of gumballs are saying that they might have to raise the price of their vending machine commodity to two cents to meet costs. In light of this situation, the old penny gumball machines (see the article in this issue on page 56) are more valuable than ever as collector's items and gumball freaks can keep their habits satisfied for half



the price if they have their own well-stocked machines. But considering that candy bars are about to be raised to 25 cents, the soon-to-be two cent gumball is still the cheapest snack around.

FUTURE SHOCK

Lieutenant Hiroo Onoda, the Japanese intelligence officer who was discovered hiding out in the Philippine jungles 30 years after World War II ended, is reportedly very disillusioned with contemporary Japanese society; he is having difficulty adjusting. Onoda, who refused to surrender until he was ordered to do so by his former superior officer on March 10, 1974, is now writing a book on his experiences titled "My 30-Year War In Lubang Island", now being serialized by a Japanese weekly magazine. Since his return to Japan, he has taken driving lessons, brushed up on his dancing (he was known to be quite a swinger in his youth) and traveled extensively throughout the country. But he has had to move frequently to escape prying reporters and badgering curiosity-seekers, and is now seriously thinking of moving to Brazil, where his brother has a rubber plantation near Sao Paulo, so he can write his memoirs in relative peace and quiet. It is also reported that one of the reasons Onoda is thinking of leaving Japan is that he feels that his mother, now 88, is unreasonably selfish in expecting him to show proper devotion to her for giving him the Spartan-like education that enabled him to survive in the jungle for so long. "I did my duty and didn't bring shame on the family", he reportedly said. "Now I'd like to lead an ordinary life."

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New York, N.Y. 10022



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: Cover—Globe Photos, Wide World Photos, King Features, Inc., Movie Star News, pp. 8-10—Movie Star News, pp. 11-13—Mark Wethli, pp. 14-16—Marga Waterford, pp. 18-21—Wide World Photos, pp. 22-25 King Features, Inc., pp. 27-31—Movie Star News, Woody Gelman, pp. 32-35—Photo World, Inc., pp. 36-40—Rick Cobb, Photo World, Inc., pp. 41-43—Linda Solomon, Willie Dixon, pp. 44-50—John Chole, Movie Star News, pp. 51-53—R.H. Tandy, Illustrator, Grosset & Dunlap Publishers, pp. 56-58—Woodrow Gelman, pp. 59-71—Movie Star News.

THE REAL THING

The "good old boy", as much a part of Dixie as hominy grits, seems to be alive and well south of the Mason-Dixon line, despite the rampant standardization of McDonald's, Walter Cronkite, and other attempts to eradicate regional differences. For those of you who live north of Virginia and west of Texas, a good old boy falls somewhere between a redneck and a plantation gentleman in a category that is almost impossible to describe by non-Southerners. As Florence King describes this species in an article in *Harper's* magazine: "He almost defies definition, but to say that he is simply a bigoted, uneducated, Southern white male is comparable to summing up Genghis Khan with the statement, 'He rode horseback well.'" But despite modernization and sometimes unfair stereotypes in movies such as *The Klansman*, there are still some specimens who can be found shooting one-nine, fanatically cheering their favorite college football teams, and drinking Seven-and-Seven. Only now they live in identical suburban houses instead of tarpaper shacks and, as Paul Henphill says in his book mourning his passing, "Shopping at the K-Mart and listening to Glen Campbell (Roy Acuff and Ernest Tubbs are too tacky now) and hiding their racism behind code words. They have forfeited their style and spirit, traded it all in on a color TV and *Sgt. Pepper's* brownies of the day, and I find them about as exciting as reformed alcoholics."

TIMBER!

Pennsylvania's oldest and largest tree, a venerable 300-year-old sycamore, met its demise last month in Rohrerstown, a small farming community in Lancaster County. The 100-foot tree, reported to be 9.5 feet in diameter, that had survived innumerable storms, hurricanes and other natural disasters since its birth some time in the 17th century, was toppled over during a severe windstorm, and now stands as a stump on the property of Mrs. Elvin Rehugler, who lives on a nearby farm.

**IN MEMORIAM**

Sid Terris, the dashing and colorful lightweight prizefighter of the 1920s, died this month of Parkinson's disease in Miami at the age of 70. Terris, known as "The Dancing Master of the East Side", and "The Ghost of the Ghetto", had a strong following of fans, especially on New York's Lower East Side, where he grew up. He fought as a professional from 1922 to 1931, winning 70 out of 107 bouts, and achieving a dozen knockouts. One of his most memorable matches was in June, 1927 at a charity benefit at the Polo Grounds in New York. His opponent was his friend Ruby Goldstein, called "The Jewel of the Ghetto", and it was the only time these two friends ever fought each other professionally. Although Terris went down for a count of nine, he suddenly rose and knocked Goldstein out, to the amazement of the spectators.

Jack Benny, who entertained American audiences in vaudeville, radio, movies, and television, died this month at his home in California of cancer. Benny's radio program was an American institution during the 30s and 40s, and his later television program had pretty much the same format, to the delight of those too young to remember radio. He remained active in show business nearly to the end, and, contrary to the miserly character he played, gave generously to many charities. And although his age was 80 in reality, he will continue to remain an eternal 39.

NESTALGA ILLUSTRATED is published by Magazine Management Co., Inc., Office of Publication, 575 Madison Avenue, New York, New York, 10022. Published monthly. Copyright © 1974 by Magazine Management Co., Inc., 575 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10022. All rights reserved. All business inquiries should be addressed to: Director of Circulation, Tom Montemmarano, 9th Floor, Volume 2, Number 4, April 1978 issue. Price \$1.00 per copy in the US and Canada. Printed in the United States of America.

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MAE WEST: IF YOU GOT IT, FLAUNT IT!

By William Christopher

Becoming a sex symbol at the age of 40, Mae's pictures gave Paramount a financial shot in the arm and the censors something to keep them occupied.

She was incredible. A drawing, winking, undulating creature with powdered flesh and hair the color and sheen of white gold, who became a movie star, a sex symbol, at the age of 40. Mae West, who at the age of 82 still talks of playing *femmes fatales*, was, with the exception of Francis The Talking Mule, perhaps the most improbable movie star in

Hollywood history. But star she was, making nine movies in the 30s and early 40s, the first two of which saved an ailing Paramount Pictures from what seemed sure bankruptcy.

Mae waited so long to shake Hollywood's moral foundation simply because she'd been doing so well without the silver screen. By the time she was seven—1899—

Mae was consistently winning amateur contests in Brooklyn and Manhattan, and when she turned eight, she also turned pro, playing a moonshiner's daughter in a Kentucky melodrama. At eighteen she was headlining in vaudeville, pulling down \$330 a week for an act that already forecast the basis of her later fame: "She danced in Turkish harem trousers," noted a review of her first Broadway show, *A la Broadway and Hello, Paris*.

She was a star. She'd acquired and abandoned a husband. She spent money on clothes and furs as if spending were her finest talent. She perfected that nasal, insinuating delivery that could make a grocery list sound like an invitation to couple between satin sheets. She got fired in New Haven for exclaiming theaters full of Yale students: "Her Wriggles Cost Mae West Her Job" read the headlines, and the Elks wrecked the theater when the management announced she wouldn't appear. She took a dance from what she called "low colored dives" and introduced the "shimmy" on the Broadway stage. She had hit after hit. But Mae didn't hit her stride until she decided to write herself a play. It would make her world famous, and scare the pants off the forces of civil virtue.

1926, Mae and her troupe open at Daly's Theater in a play called *Sex*. All hell broke loose. No New York gager would accept ads. But



Mae, uxorious as ever, played the role of Letitia Van Allen in *Myra Breckinridge*



an audience that Mae later estimated was 80% men loved the play, and within days orchestra seats were selling for \$10 when the top New York prices had heretofore been \$2.80. Success, however, was

"No, but I saw something in her middle that moved from east to west."

Incredibly, hoots of laughter from a packed courtroom notwithstanding, Mae was convicted of

(Mean to Mae as it may seem, this is as good a place as any to deal with what has become a standard way of seeing her. Marjorie Rosen in *Pecora Venus*: "she resembled a robust drag queen.")



Mae with W.C. Fields in *My Little Chickadee* (1938), and Cary Grant in *She Done Him Wrong* (1933).

no barrier to the bluesoes. Sex had been playing to packed houses for 47 weeks when Mae and her play got busted. According to Mae the trial was a travesty: "The Assistant D.A. who was prosecuting me, could not find one line or one word in the play that was profane, lewd, lascivious or obscene. So he shifted gears and contended that 'Miss West's personality, looks, walk, mannerisms and gestures made the lines and situations suggestive.'" While that may strike the modern reader as reasonably shrewd theater criticism, especially from a D.A., Mae says he couldn't make the charges stick. So the keepers of morality zeroed in on a dance number Mae did in the play, a fully clothed belly dance to "St. Louis Blues."

"The prosecutor questioned one of the arresting officers in detail about the dance," Mae later wrote. "The officer blushed and testified 'Miss West moved her navel up and down and from right to left.'"

"Did you actually see her navel?" my lawyer asked him.

"corrupting the morals of youth" and sentenced to 10 days in the slammer, where, by the way, she managed to convince the warden to let her keep her own silk underwear—the prison issue bloomers were "rough on the body" she protested. Let out two days early "for good behaviour," Mae proceeded to contradict the lie of her supposed reformation. Her next play was called *The Drag*, a play about homosexuality that Mae opened in Paterson, New Jersey.

The inflated ticket prices commanded by Sex were nothing compared to the bonanza rendered by *The Drag*; Mae charged and got \$50 a piece for the best seats, and the two week run in New Jersey not only took the show into the black, it made a profit for the author and star that amounted to \$30,000. But success or no, Mae decided not to take any chances with prudies across the river in New York. She closed the show and the "Big Apple" had to wait almost 40 years for a hit play about male homosexuality, *The Boys in the Band*.

George Davis in *Vanity Fair*, 1934: "the greatest female impersonator of all time." In fact, when a famous psychic forecast said that a "famous star will die and will be revealed to have been a man," more than a few people speculated that West was the one. No one but Mae and her numerous boyfriends of eight decades can swear for sure, but, at any rate, it's an indication of Mae's sexual trailblazing; she was androgynous before her time.)

Mae's next play was a disaster; *The Wicked Age* closed in two weeks. But Mae was just warming up. *Diamond Lil* was waiting in the wings. When the story of a turn-of-the-century Bowery dancehall girl opened in 1928 the reviews were solid gold; Robert Garland wrote in the *Evening Telegraph*, "From now on, I intend to applaud her from the top lines of my column and the front rows of theaters in which she happens, by the grace of God and the laxity of the Police Department, to be playing." This time, however, Mae

By the 20s, Mae had perfected her famous nasal, insinuating delivery that could make a grocery list sound like an invitation to couple between satin sheets.



Go West, Young Man (1937), and Belle O' The Nixies (1934), both Paramount

was safe from the law, and *Lil* played for almost a year to packed houses before it went on the road. (The road tour would be a long one; in one production or another, interrupted by movies and nightclub performances, Mae toured her *Diamond Lil* until the early 50s. And in 1974 she told John Huston's daughter Anjelica that she'd like to do *Lil* as a film, but this time in color.)

Before she left Broadway for the provinces, Mae had time for one more brush with big city morality. Not content to have written and starred in the season's biggest hit, Mae penned another play, *Pleasure Man*, which opened in the fall of 1928. Well, almost opened. The police raided the theater during the third act and arrested the cast. Mae got an injunction, re-opened the show, but it played only one evening and part of a matinee before the cops were back, vacated injunction in hand. Despite the fact that Mae finally won her case in court, she never re-opened *Pleasure Man*; "the edge was off the show,"



she was to write years later.

While Wall Street and the nation's economy was collapsing, Mae toured with *Lil* and *Sex*, and wrote a novel called *The Constant Sinner* which she also turned into a play. It was one of the few survivors of the hard season of 1931-32; of 152 plays that opened in New York that year, 121 folded fast. Hollywood got the message.

Ten weeks at \$5,000 per. And Mae West was one of the few stars in America who could afford to think over Paramount's offer. As it was, she almost gave up the movies before she ever stepped before a



From Every Way's A Holiday (1937).

camera. Her lines weren't good enough, she protested, and over the protests of director and producer, she managed to rewrite her part. In some cases, she won the right to direct herself. "I know audiences. I know what they laugh at, and I know what they expect from me," she told the studio. Because she insisted, *Night after Night* and Mae's relatively small part in it are memorable. "On film I walked into George Raft's fashionable clip-joint, and the checkroom girl took one look at all the diamonds I was wearing and exclaimed, 'Goodness, what beautiful diamonds!'"

"'Goodness had nothing to do with it, dearie,' I replied, and moved away and up the stairs again into motion picture history."

Mae was a hit. She demanded that her next film be her own story,



By the time 'Going To Town' was made in 1935, Mae was drawing the second highest salary in America, topped only by W. H. Hearst, who began a campaign against her.

Diamond Lil, titled for the screen, *She Done Him Wrong*. Incredibly, the film was completed in 18 days of shooting. Mae could boast, after the picture was released, of discovering Cary Grant who played her young leading man; saving Paramount's limping finances; and adding yet another classic line to the modern argot: "Come up'n see me some time." Not bad for three weeks work. Another hit followed. *I'm No Angel* broke theater attendance records all over the country. This time the line that people remembered was Mae's petulant order to her maid, "Beulah, peel

me a grape!" *Belle of the Nineties* came next, and by this time—1934—Mae was making money like her characters made men; \$300,000 for starring in a picture and an extra \$100,000 for writing the story. By 1935, after *Going To Town* and *Klondike Annie* had been made, Mae was drawing the second highest salary in the United States; \$480,833, according to the Internal Revenue Service. Only William Randolph Hearst, the newspaper tycoon, was being paid more.

And whether Hearst was upset by

(Continued on page 72)

5 WAYS TO BEAT PROHIBITION

By Jean Guck and George Glassgold

A light-hearted look at how the guinea pigs of the "Noble Experiment" used their good old American know-how to turn it into the Ignoble Fiasco.

In 1920, as you probably know, a group of high-minded individuals decided to conduct a Noble Experiment. This experiment was based on the premise that alcohol, as an Evil Substance, was responsible for murder, madness, decadence, sin, death and all kinds of not-so-nice things. The Noble Experimenters, consisting of various and sundry religious fanatics, social crusaders and women's groups, felt that the best way to snatch doomed individuals from the primrose path to ruin was to eliminate what they thought was the one basic evil—Demon Rum. But, in so doing, they managed as well to take a lot of the fun out of life—and fill the pockets of the criminals at the same time. The majority of the many unwilling guinea pigs were fighting back with all their resourcefulness to make sure that the Noble Experiment would turn out to be the Ignoble Fiasco. How did they go about that and get away with it, despite the fact that it was against the law to buy booze, sell it, transport it across state lines, or make it?

Well, we have unearthed a rare "underground" handbook that tells the would-be drinker just how to go about getting what he needs, and includes the following tips and advice.

With an elementary knowledge of chemistry and a good-sized bathtub, you can turn your cellar into a working still.





Half the fun of a Canadian vacation is taking home certain "souvenirs". Hist No. 4 tells you how to get them over the border.

1. GET TO KNOW YOUR SPEAKEASY

Any healthy, normal pleasure-loving person on the move will immediately ask the question, "Where can I get some good booze in this town?" If the respondent is equally pleasure-loving, he will mention This-Great-Little-Place-That-Nobody-Knows-About (except you, he and a few hundred intimate friends), a sort of private club where the liquid refreshment is not the type normally found at church socials or WCTU meetings. They are called speakeasies, mainly because of the fact that after only a few samples of the refreshment offered therein, even the most inhibited is transformed into a Round Table Raconteur (or at least he *thinks* he is). However, they don't admit just anybody! After all, you might be a Fed or even Carrie Nation for all they know. So, in order to assure that they don't get "raided," they have to make sure you're "OK." This is accomplished by making the prospective entrant go through a series of secret knocks, passwords,

signals, etc. It is absolutely necessary to know just precisely what these signs of recognition are. It does help to know what you are expected to do or say in order to gain admittance. Always knock precisely the required number of times, and say whatever you're expected to say. Once inside, act as if you belong there. Don't ask too many questions, don't take pictures of the owners or the customers, and never yell "Raid!", even as a joke, because nobody will think it's very funny.

But of course, there's always the possibility that the place might indeed get raided, in which case, it is good to know how to conduct yourself, which leads to...

2. HOW NOT TO GET RAIDED

You're in your favorite speakeasy enjoying a convivial drink of bathtub gin and real New Jersey dry vermouth with your friends, when, suddenly the door bursts open and in come the Feds, the Secret Service, the Coast Guard, and The Untouchables, complete with guns,

rubber soled shoes, handcuffs and all the necessary equipment for the complete bust. One immediate question that comes to mind is how to avoid getting your picture splashed across the front page of the Daily Tabloid while spending a night in the slammer. There are several ways of doing this. The first, if you're equipped with a fleet pair of feet and a good sense of direction is to beat it out the back door. No speakeasy worth its prime Scotch comes without a back door where one can make a quick exit when the need arises. But if it's too late to run other tactics can be employed, for example, look very wide-eyed and innocent and explain to the cops that you were informed that this was a WCTU dinner-dance and you must have been the victim of a practical joke. Or you can say that you're an undercover FBI agent and, boy, you sure are glad that this den of iniquity is finally being shut down once and for all. And, of course, you can always use the old I'm-a-sociologist - who's - making - a - study - of - the - quaint - habits - of - the - drinking - subculture play.

Prohibition was responsible for, among other things, a renewed interest in "home cooking", travelling abroad, and certain patent medicines.

In this case, it helps to come equipped with glasses, an intellectual grin, a tweed jacket, a notebook and a large vocabulary. In other words, pretend that you are there for any reason at all except to get yourself zonkered. However, if all your friends are out of town or in the hoosegow, or if you're too dull to come up with a quick rejoinder

in case of a raid ("Who, me? I'm just here to read the gas meter" wouldn't fool anybody), perhaps you'll want to try...

3. MAKING YOUR OWN

These are the days when we make our own fun. All that is needed is an elementary knowledge of basic

chemistry (or having grown up in the mountains of Tennessee, which comes to the same thing). But if you're a city or town dweller like most of us, making sour mash in your spare time for fun and profit can be a relatively new and creative experience. All you need is a good-sized vat, such as a bathtub

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When the Feds come calling on your favorite speakeasy, there are countless creative gambits you can use to stay out of the slammer.

MEMORIES OF THE WAR YEARS

By Marge Waterfield

It was a time when patriotism ran high, women became truck drivers and factory workers and the entire nation worked together to Win The War.

The recent nostalgia craze has made many everyday items from the 1941-1945 era exciting memorabilia. True, these items are far from being antiques, but perhaps that's the intriguing part of collecting them. Hardly a household with occupants over 40 doesn't have a wealth of untold treasures in dresser drawers, attics, and closets.

It was a period unique in our nation's history. Patriotism ran high at every age level and shortages and rationing were accepted with little criticism. Women who had never held jobs before became truck drivers and factory workers. But most of all, the entire nation worked together toward one common goal—To Win The War!

Many of the nostalgic things saved from this period, although it was only 30 years ago, now appear remarkably different from things today. If you can't find any relics around your home, try attending garage sales, flea markets, and antique shows. Most things from this era generally are not priced too high.

Perhaps one of the first things that comes to mind about the

World War II era is the music. I think more patriotic and tender love songs came out of the WWII war years than those of all the other wars combined. Records and sheet music were produced by the millions and every household seemed to have a record player or a piano.

Who could forget such popular songs as "Comin' In On a Wing and A Prayer," "White Cliffs Of Dover," "I Couldn't Sleep A Wink Last Night," "I'll Walk Alone," "Rum and Coca Cola," "Let's Remember Pearl Harbor," "I'll Never Smile Again," "Praise The Lord and Pass The Ammunition," "Don't Sit Under The Apple Tree," "Long Ago and Far Away," "You'll Never Know," and of course "White Christmas."

Collecting sheet music not only brings back memories of old songs but makes you realize how many of the stars of the early 40's are still among the top entertainers today; such as, Frank Sinatra, Helen O'Connell, Ella Fitzgerald, Kate Smith, Bing Crosby, Doris Day, and Cuy Lombardo. Others popular to sheet music collectors are the Dorsey Brothers, Vaughn

Monroe, and Glenn Miller.

Garage sales are usually good sources of finding old sheet music. It might sell anywhere from 10¢ to \$1.00 a piece, depending on its condition and on the nostalgic value it has to the seller.

Old 78 R.P.M. records are also quite collectible. If you don't find an old stack of them in your cellar or garage, they are often found also at garage sales and sometimes at second hand stores, such as The Salvation Army and Volunteers of America.

Since the wear and tear on records is vital to their playing ability, try to find those in as good a condition as possible. They sell for as little as 25¢ each or as much as \$2.00 each for certain scarce recordings. If you wonder why teenagers were in better physical condition 30 years ago, just lift a stack of about 50 old 78 records and you'll know!

Recently a revised version of the

Everything from food and clothing to gasoline and tires was rationed and everyone received his own ration book. Newspapers published ration calendars like this to help confused citizens use the right stamps on the right days.

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Ration Calendar

MEATS, CHEESE, BUTTER, FATS, CANNED FISH AND CANNED MILK: Today—Book 4 red stamps A-5 through W-6 good for 18 points each indefinitely. No points required for pork, veal, lamb, some cuts of beef, canned fish, lard and cooking oil. Meat dealers still offer two red points and four cents per pound for waste kitchen lard.

PROCESSED FOOD: Book 4 blue stamps A-5 through V-5 are good for 10 points each under taken releasing indefinitely.

GASOLINE: June 25—Last day to use stamp 12 in A books for three gallons of gasoline. Today—B-5, B-4, C-3 and C-4 stamps valid for five gallons of gasoline each.

TIRE—Inspections of passenger car tires no longer necessary unless applying for new tires. Keep tire inspection record. It must be submitted with gasoline ration applications.

SUGAR: Today—Stamps 38, 31 and 32 in Book 4 good for five pounds of sugar indefinitely. Stamp 40 good for five pounds under existing allotments until Feb. 25, 1945. Spare stamp 37 must accompany applications for additional canning sugar asked from rationing boards.

SHOES: No. 1 and No. 2 airplane stamps in Book 2 each good for 1 pair of shoes indefinitely. Take your book to the store with you. Dealers cannot accept loose shoe stamps.

FUEL OIL: Sept. 34—Last day to use stamps 4 and 5. All coupons worth 10 gallons a unit, with most coupons worth several units each. New Period 1 coupons may be used immediately upon receipt from ration boards.

LIQUOR: Today—Eleventh period in Ohio liquor rationing permits purchase of two gifts, one fifth or quart of whisky or domestic gin. Other liquors, including cordials, rum, brandy and imported gin are non-rationed. Period ends July 1.

June 17, 1945

ERNIE PYLE Roving Reporter

**Americans in Tunisia Wonder What's Coming Next
But, What's It Is, They Wish It Would Hurry**

IN TUNISIA (By Wireless)—The finish of a campaign such as this one in Tunisia has a definite reaction on everybody. At first there is terrific enthusiasm. Then after a few days a letdown occurs. Everybody realizes, once he relaxes, how terribly tired he is. He is like a rubber band that has been stretched too tight. A feeling of antinatalism settles over him. Dozens of times I've heard such expressions as "I'm all jumpy" and "I feel at loose ends" and "I want to get moving. I don't care where, but somewhere."



Ernie Pyle

and the back completely un-
We in the o-
lacking of wh-
be. We can d-
soon, for the
soon is getting u-

AS FOR me, I'll do either, back into Algeria and get some letters read a few letters down for a couple of weeks—writing in readings. You'll be under a few more weeks, for I have a items to put on paper. What comes after body's guess. I might England for a while. A Cooch's test of Scott might even take a Me-ounce or feed the pipe. Peter's in Rome, who and

THE Germans didn't get the ethical line in one they continued trying to their own stuff after the war. Technicians were set after, a there broke their rifle over

sides forward. There was a sprinkling of Italian prisoners too, and a scattering of American, British and French soldiers on various errands. It was indeed an international assembly.

In this far beyond, forward there was a windmill. The printing of the windmill's big fan seems so incongruous that I had to get it down, for it said "Pitt & Walling Manufacturing Co., Knoxville, Ind." You just can't get foreign enough to lose at Rocatara.

One of the English-speaking German soldiers asked me why I was copping that down, and when I told him it was because the

know you will not be able to resist trying the old jitterbug.

And do you remember that all paper jackets on the records at that time were decorated with the "For Victory, Buy War Bonds" emblem?

Rationing was also a big part of the war years. It was designed to enable every family to get its fair share of items made scarce by the war production or from the inability to import them. Nearly everything from food to clothing to cigarettes and even gasoline and tires were rationed.

Centers were set up in schools and voting booths to distribute the ration books. Every member of the family received his own books, with the slogan "If You Don't Need It, Don't Buy It" on the back cover. To keep everyone in a patriotic spirit about using the stamps, they were printed with pictures of tanks, ships, guns, and airplanes on them.

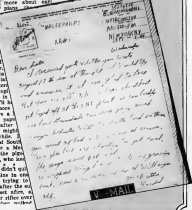
To help confused citizens use the right stamps on the right days, newspapers published daily "Ration Calendars."

If you should find any of your old ration stamp books that were saved you will find them most interesting. Ration Calendars from the papers will make you wonder how anyone figured out what stamps from what books to use on what days!

Perhaps one of the most unique items from World War II is the censored mail and the V-Mail. Contrary to recent soldiers in battle zones, servicemen in battle areas then were not allowed to tell their whereabouts or any information concerning military happenings around him. Each letter was read and stamped by a censor. Any suspicious words or sentences were either blacked out or completely cut out.

Toward the end of the war "V-Mail" was put into effect. These were small photostatic copies of the serviceman's original letter, censored and eventually delivered to some eager family in the U.S.

Reading old letters from WWII, you will find they are filled with an unbelievable amount of trivia. Since location, or any mention of the war could not be written, it didn't leave much for a guy who had been overseas three or four years to say except, "How's everybody back home? I'm fine.



Since soldiers were forbidden to divulge military data, censored V-Mail went into effect. Columnist Ernie Pyle read—and died—with the boys in the foxholes.

Andrews Sisters' famous "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy of Company B" has made everyone over 35 years for other Andrews hits such as "Pennsylvania Polka," "Apple Blossom Time," "Bei Mir Bist Du Schön" and "You're In the Army, Mr. Jones." To show their patriotism, the Andrews Sisters even wore Army-type uniforms for movies

and personal appearances.

You can spend many an entertaining evening by inviting friends over (who were teenagers during WWII) and playing all the old favorites like "In The Mood," "Gotta Be This or That" and "Bumble Boogie." If you happen to be as lucky as I was and find Tommy Dozey's "Opus No. 1," I

Since he could not mention anything regarding the war in his letters, it didn't leave much for a serviceman to write except "How's everybody back home?"

Received the box of cookies you sent. All the guys liked them. Did it snow for Christmas this year? Tell everyone I said hello. I'll close for now. Love, John." Although most people threw their old letters out after the war, occasionally folks still find a few tucked away in an old box of pictures or clippings from those years.

Foreign money brought back by C.I.s who fought their way around the world can often tell a story of its own. Besides the foreign money, many times military money was printed and issued to soldiers. These make very interesting mementos now. Of course, even within our own country we used the now-almost-rare steel penny.

Working in defense plants allowed women to have more spending money of their own for luxuries than ever before. One such luxury was the beautiful perfumers produced at the DeVilbiss Co. in Toledo, Ohio. Throw-away spray bottles were unheard of and DeVilbiss offered ladies a tremendous selection of fancy spray bottles for their favorite perfume. There were crackle, crystal, gold lustre, and many more in about any size, shape or color you might imagine. These perfumers are often found for sale at flea markets and are selling for as much as \$5-10 each.

Collecting magazines and newspapers from the war years brings back memories of advertisements and journalism unheard of today. Most famous movie stars, celebrities, and even Generals appeared in ads promoting War Bonds and companies making defense material.

Copies of the ever-loved Ernie Pyle's column certainly bring to mind a type of down home journalism that has vanished from the American scene. He wrote not for the top brass and not what the politicians always wanted to hear. He wrote about the little guy—the private—the foot soldier. He ate with them, he traveled with them, he swapped stories about back home with them, and he slept in the fox holes with them. Unfor-

★ One afternoon, our family had a good old-fashioned heart-to-heart talk about America and what it means to us. I have tried to write down the conversation about as it went. . . .



CLAUDIA—"I am proud of America's humanity!"

CLIFF:

You know, something happened last evening that impressed me enormously. I was walking alone and suddenly I heard a voice say something about "my country." It was a boy's voice—thirteen or twelve years old, I guess. He was talking to another kid. "It's my country," he kept saying. "My country! My Dad said it was." The second kid said "Yeah? So what?" The first kid repeated "It's my country. . . I love it!"

PAUL:

Enthusiastic youngster!

CLIFF:

You bet! And the point is—the one who said "My country" was a little Hispanic boy whose mother is dead in that big house on the corner.

PAUL:

And the other boy?

CLIFF:

He was the son of the family who live in the house. But, Paul, that little Hispanic kid was so full of love for America, he was boiling over. It didn't make any difference that he was worn and battered. There he was, saying "My country!" to a son of a wealthy, long-established American family.

PAUL:

Whose only reaction was to yawn and say "So what?"

CLIFF:

Right! Of course, that attitude isn't true of all well-to-do American families of long-standing. But it's easy to get careless and forgetful. I'm not a cheap, glib, belly-aching patriot, but, despite it, I think it's time people sat up and took notice.

JACK:

Well—what can you expect from a twelve year old child?

CLIFF:

He tell you what you can expect from a kid of any age. You can expect the same attitude as you find in their parents. I say it's up to the parents to see their children think the right way.

NICKY:

Bravo, Cliff!

All-out efforts to encourage patriotism during World War II included this inspirational booklet sent to listeners of the soap opera *One Man's Family*.

tunately, he also died with them.

If you can find any copies of these marvelous columns, read them thoroughly. They will give you a pretty good idea of what the war was like to the combat soldier.

Speaking of newspapers, no one can help but be excited when they find some copies of Extras, issued when some spectacular event

changed the course of the war. Television's instant up-to-the-minute news coverage has eliminated the need for newspaper editions with such announcements.

Occasionally you will find a copy of an old newspaper at a flea market, but it is rare. For some reason, these are generally precious to the people who have saved



Sheet music to some of the popular songs during the war years. Record jackets often included the exhortation to buy war bonds

them. It is almost an American tradition to say: "I remember what I was doing when Pearl Harbor was bombed" or "I'll never forget the celebrations of V-E or V-J Day." The Extras covering these events generally hold a lot of sentimental memories for most folks.

If you should be lucky enough to find any war Extras for sale, however, they usually are not priced at more than \$5.00.

As for myself, I think it would be fun to hear once more the newshoy at a busy intersection calling out in a high shrill voice, "Extra, Extra! Read all about it!"

No story on the war years would be complete without mentioning the radio war bulletins, the Fireside Chats, and the famous newscasters like Lowell Thomas, Fulton Lewis Jr., and H.V. Kaltenborn. How many of you remember, however, that the daily soap opera geared its dialogue toward the war effort and patriotism? Soap opera heroines tearfully sent their imaginary husbands and sons off to fight and encountered the same problems that their listeners were enduring.

To make the impression more lasting many of them offered pamphlets, poetry and dialogue

promoting the American way of life and stressing how important it was that we all stick together for a noble cause.

Depending on what theater of war your relatives served in, you may also find many interesting mementos they brought home. Having uncles serving in both the South Pacific and Italy, I remember an assortment of relics around our house; for example a Japanese bugle and sword, coral necklaces, a grass skirt, cameo jewelry, and dog tags. And who could ever forget the silk pillow covers proclaiming "MOTHER" or "SWEETHEART" sent from almost every boot camp across the nation?

Before you go out and try to purchase these mementos of the early 40's, take some time and hunt through your attic, basement, old trunks, and garage. You might be surprised at how many treasures you will find.

If you are wondering what you'll do with them after you do dig them out, they can be used to very cleverly decorate your home. The old sheet music can be framed or decoupaged on plaques and hung in the family room near the piano or in the basement recreation room. It is an inexpensive way to

decorate and certainly something you won't see in everyone's home.

The records cannot be displayed easily because of their weight and fragility but I did find an interesting way to make them more enjoyable. I taped all mine onto cassette tapes. It is very easy if you have a record player or stereo with a taping outlet. I often enjoy taking my cassette player in the car and playing tapes instead of listening to D.J. programs.

The ration books, foreign money, V-Mail, and other memorabilia such as medals and uniform patches could be framed in delightful shadowbox-type frames available in most hobby stores. These boxes have glass across the front to protect the items and usually come in a variety of sizes.

I'm sure when you begin to search for these WWII souvenirs you'll find many things I haven't even mentioned. Use a little imagination and you will find many ways of using them to decorate your home. Almost anything goes with anything anymore. You don't have to have everything in one room from the same era, either. Mix them up.

Good luck and have fun!



THE LONGEST HITTING STREAK IN BASEBALL

By Michael Valenti

Early in 1941, DiMaggio faced the boos and catcalls of the fans. He had no way of knowing it, of course, but 1941 would prove to be his best year.

In 1941, in his sixth year as a Yankee, Joe DiMaggio found himself facing the boos and catcalls of the fans. Since he was an established star (he had won the American League batting title twice and been chosen Most Valuable Player in 1939), this came as something of a shock, considering the Yanks had won four straight championships. Bitter over losing narrowly in 1940, however, short-memory fans blamed it on Joe, who had missed the first month of the season when an old knee injury flared up.

Moreover, after four nonpareil years, 1941 was beginning to look like a crazy quilt of sudden shifts, enough to spook anybody. First, he'd gotten off to a tremendous start from opening day and was batting .528—when the fates called a halt. By steady attrition his average plummeted more than 200 points. By mid-May the Yanks were playing badly—and the boos were beginning to escalate.

A painfully shy man whose reticence could easily be mistaken for arrogance DiMaggio was profoundly wounded by the callousness of the fans. He had no way of knowing it, of course, but 1941 would prove to be his best year, the watershed season after which the fans would never again doubt either his playing ability or his integrity.

So on May 15, 1941, the Yanks were in a losing streak and

DiMaggio was in the throes of a becalmed slump. He did manage to get his first hit in three games, however. Far from pleased with himself, he was trying to remember not to lunge at the ball.

Congress had designated May 18th as "I Am An American Day." At the Stadium ceremonies, Lucy Monroe sang "Keep the Home Fires Burning," and Joe did his part by thrashing out three torrid hits. Since he'd gotten hits in the intervening games, the fans were off his back—at least temporarily. But they were still disgruntled because the team seemed to have settled complacently into a win-one, lose-one pattern, hardly a pennant formula.



Over the next week, Joe still hadn't found his best stride. He was getting at least a hit a day, but couldn't seem to get untracked.

On the 26th, the traveling Yanks had a day off. The benefits of rest were immediately apparent: the following night DiMaggio clobbered four straight hits including a homer against a trio of Washington pitchers. The *New York Times* pointed out that Johnny Sturm, the light-hitting first baseman had hit in 10 straight games, the veteran Frank Crosetti in nine. No one seemed to notice that DiMag had also had a 12-game hitting skid.

However, once again Joe slipped back into the one-a-day tempo. This was partly due to a chronic glandular condition that forced him to hold his head rigidly to ease the pain.

League-leading Cleveland's pitchers were especially rough on the Yanks. Mel Harder's slow-breaking curves were tantalizing and hypnotic, perfectly calculated to throw off a batter's timing—especially when he had to face Bob Feller's fastball the next day.

On June 1, Harder pitched the second half of a doubleheader, blending his soft stuff into the late-afternoon shadows. For seven innings he was superlative, yielding only two hits. But the Yanks finally broke through, Joe got his solitary hit and Arthur Daley's *Times* account acknowledged for the first time that "DiMaggio now

has hit safely in 18 straight games."

Feller, not at his top form, beat the Yanks on the following day anyway, 7-5. DiMaggio got a single and double, but the game was dwarfed by the death of Lou Gehrig. It was a subdued and sorrowful team that left for Detroit.

Perhaps Gehrig's death served as an unconscious prod to bring home to Joe that he was now the team leader, that the players looked to him the way they once had looked to Gehrig, and to Ruth before him.

In any event, a few days later DiMaggio broke loose. In an 11-7 romp over the Browns he belted three singles, then clouted three home runs and a double in a Saturday doubleheader. His hitting streak was now at 24 and his neck he said, in the understatement of a year full of hyperbole and bombast, "felt better."

Now for the first time—and belatedly—a game-by-game curiosity on the part of the fans began slowly. A scratch single in a game against Chicago brought him within range of the team high of 29, held jointly by Earle Combs and Roger Peckinpaugh. Back at the Stadium, it was Feller again, who hadn't lost a game since early May. In a curtailed five-inning game, Joe only came to bat twice. But his solid double in the third gave him a shot at his first target. On June 16th he tied the team record, setting a new mark of 30 the following day.

DiMaggio now took dead aim at the modern record of 41 games set by George Sisler in 1922. Could he keep it up for another 11 games?

He was almost stopped the first day by Chicago's Thornton Lee. Very sharp that day, the left-hander's fastball was acting like a screwball — tailing away from right-handed hitters. DiMaggio drove a hard smash to deep short where Luke Appling managed to get in front of the ball and knock it down; but he had no play. 31.

Over the next two days famine turned to feast, Joe belting seven straight hits, including a towering 400-foot home run. 33.

All over the country now, as if by unspoken consent, DiMaggio's day at bat was given precedence even over the latest news. So that, on June 22nd, when Germany invaded Russia, radio broadcasts

first quickly reported that Joe had hit in his 35th game, then went on to the news story that would change everyone's lives.

From this point on, whenever he appeared in public there was a good chance he'd start a riot. There were only three "havens": his hotel room, the outfield and a dimly lit movie house, preferably showing a feature like "London After Dark."

The pressure on him was tre-

and the pitcher, the most unorthodox delivery in the league against the most perfect swing.

Dead silence. Anker pitched. DiMaggio swung. The ball soared over the leaping third baseman's glove and into left field. For five full minutes the crowd cheered, while Joe's teammates pounded their bats on the dugout steps.

Getting hits in his next two games, DiMaggio's sense of relief that it was almost over was shat-



On January 1, 1954, Marilyn Monroe and Joe DiMaggio waited outside a San Francisco judge's chamber to get married.

mendous. Naturally, every pitcher who faced him wanted to be "the man who stopped DiMag." In the 36th game, for example, strong-armed Bob Muncie of the Browns got Joe out three times. DiMaggio's chances had dwindled down to one last time at bat. Within one pitch of fame, Muncie gamely elected to pitch to Joe. In the bottom of the 8th, Joe nailed a clean single to right putting him within five of Sisler's record.

Two days later, the game was virtually a carbon copy. Eldon Auker, one of the last of the underhand pitchers, had shackled DiMag until the 8th. Gloom settled over the crowd, since they thought he might not get another crack at Auker. But an unlooked-for base on balls gave Joe a turn at bat in the 8th. And once again it was Joe.

tered by a sports page headline story. A sportswriter had dug up the fact that in 1897 "Wee Willie" Keeler had compiled a 44-game streak. Joe felt ill. One had ballooned to four, two to five—and when and how would it all end?

The Yanks faced the Senators before the largest Monday doubleheader crowd (31,000) in Washington history. Feverish with anticipation—and the 98-degree heat—even batting practice was interfered with when fans leaped onto the field.

DiMaggio faced Dutch Leonard, a veteran who threw a deceptive knuckler. Leonard got Joe twice with his tricky assortment of dippy doo. The third time he set him up with soft stuff, then tried to sneak a fastball past him. Joe lashed out, driving the ball on what seemed

like a slide-rule computed trajectory between center and left. The centerfielder dove for the ball as it tailed down, but it skipped past him and rolled to the bleacher wall. DiMaggio had tied Sisler at 41. In the near-pandemonium that broke out, Joe's favorite tar-blackened bat disappeared.

Perhaps this unnerved Joe. At any rate, he failed to hit in his first three appearances in the nightcap. His fourth time up he faced relief pitcher Arnold Anderson—whose high tight pitch almost decked him. The next pitch was a low fastball and Joe golfed it over the pitcher's head into center field as the electrified crowd rose to its feet and went wild.

Now DiMaggio was mobbed wherever he went. Twice souvenir hunters snatched his cap off his head during games. Special police hustled him in and out of the ball parks, changing tactics daily.

Another doubleheader, this one at home against Boston, would be Joe's last hurdle. A hit in each game would tie him with Keeler at 44, a record that had stood for 44 years, coincidentally.

A midweek crowd of 52,832 jammed the Stadium. As Red Sox pitcher Mickey Harris retired Joe in his first two at-bats, a pall of gloom fell over the crowd. DiMaggio came up for the third time. In a weird historical quirk, Joe hit a high-bouncing ball down the line, very much like the Baltimore chop Willie Keeler had perfected on the rock-hard diamonds of the 1890s. It was a difficult chance for the third baseman. Concentrating on spearing the crazily bounding ball, he hurried his throw—and threw it away. The expectant crowd leaned forward, peering into the press box. When the "hit" sign was flashed, the crowd bellowed its approval.

That the Red Sox had won the first game seemed inconsequential; the crowd was more concerned with the ominous overhead clouds. When play resumed, DiMaggio, remembering the rain-shortened earlier games, wisely belted a single in the first inning, tying Keeler's record. And after five innings of play, the rains came.

Thursday was another scorcher. DiMaggio was facing 19-year-old Heber Newsome, who would go on to win 19 games that year. Once

again the crowd froze into silence every time Joe batted. In the fifth inning, Newsome's fourth pitch was a high inside fastball. At the crack of the bat the fans knew; moving back toward the fence, left fielder Ted Williams knew. He watched the ball sail deep into the stands as the crowd roared in jubilation. Even veteran sportswriters in the press box rose to their feet and applauded. DiMaggio had done it.

It's a hit, every time as DiMaggio swings in 1941 and 1951, bottom picture.



Now there was no one left to pass. There was only the moot question: "How long can he go on?" The pressure, however, never abated. It mounted through each succeeding game and worked its solitary erosion at night: Tomorrow, it whispered, is Armageddon.

Astonishingly, DiMaggio broke loose for his hottest spurt, rolling up 24 hits in the next 11 games. Three of them came on June 16th in Cleveland, rumping his streak total to 50.

The following night, under the lights, a record 67,468 fans filled Municipal Stadium. For the first time, DiMaggio was facing Al Smith, a journeyman left-hander with an undistinguished record. In the first inning Joe swung at a fastball, smashing a grass-cutter straight down the line at third. Lunging toward the foul line, Ken Keltner backhanded the ball, then fired across his body, nipping the speedy DiMaggio.

With the score a tight 1-0 against him, Smith pitched DiMag so carefully in the fourth that he lost him. The crowd's reaction was a

(Continued on page 73)





WAS KRAZY KAT THE GREAT AMERICAN COMIC STRIP?

By Bob Abel

Krazy Kat was rich with something we have too little of—fantasy. It is wise with pitying irony; it has delicacy, sensitiveness and unearthly beauty.

Question: Is it more of a tribute to the creator of a classic comic strip—one which is not only long-lasting, but which has enjoyed critical acclaim as well as wide readership—to continue the strip after its creator's death, or to discontinue it, saying, in effect, that it would be kind of blasphemy to presume that anyone else could cut the mustard as well as the original artist? Or, to paraphrase Citizen Socrates himself, shouldn't the good that men do be interred with their bones? Or put yet another way, can't imitation also be an inferior form of flattery?

For example, Walt Kelly creator of *Pogo*, died some months ago, yet the strip is still running, being continued, I believe, by his wife and son, plus a collaborator. Being a great admirer of the strip, and of Kelly himself—whom I was privileged to know—I find this rather touching. In the same regard, however, while *Pogo* remains amusing, no one—including his family—would claim that Kelly's special bite and comic bravado aren't sorely missed.

By way of definite antecedent, this brings to mind the case of *Krazy Kat*, a comic strip which delighted a coterie of readers—and tickled the intellectual funny bones of more serious types—for three-plus decades. *Krazy Kat*, created by George Herriman, was truly remarkable on a number of counts. While the draughtsmanship itself



"Herriman died on April 25, 1944, and King Features Syndicate wisely allowed him to take his sweet little cat along to heaven. It was a unique tribute to the individual genius of a master cartoonist that the syndicate announced no competitors would be held to select a successor. Genius of that type rarely strikes twice." — Conlton Waugh, author of *The Funnies*, published in 1944



All *Krazy Kat* strips and panels are © King Features Syndicate, Inc. and are reprinted by permission.

wasn't fine in the usual sense, Herriman's sense of design was years ahead of almost anyone else in the field, his use of color in Sunday strips was just plain brilliant, and his playfulness with shifting backgrounds and objects in the strip absolutely requires allusions to Picasso.

As for the writing, it was merely terrific—fabulous use of phonetic language, a literary sensibility in terms of nuance of character and expression which remains admirable even today, and a quirky fairy tale of a story which managed to communicate on the most simplistic level—more on this later—while attempting something rather complicated and, equally important, rather lovely.

While Herriman died in 1944, King Features, which had been distributing the strip since 1913 (*Krazy Kat* had a crazy career, actually debuting in a 1909 Herriman strip entitled *Mary*, then becoming a part of the *Dingbat Family*, which itself was transformed to *The Family Upstairs*, before emerging as the title character in Herriman's classic strip), ran all the unpublished strips he had drawn before his death, then began re-running some old strips.

However, contrary to what Mr. Waugh states in the box quote accompanying this article, I am informed by a King Features executive that the syndicate did



The language of Krazy was "partly Dickens and partly Yiddish—and the rest is not to be identified, for it is Krazy." It is also phonetic—consider the characters including Dos Klyote and Alec Kat.

experiment with another artist who would have "ghosted" the strip, but that his work "was too far below Herriman's level to justify continuing the strip."

I asked this executive what kind of circulation Krazy Kat had at the time of Herriman's death, and he replied that he didn't know. Certainly re-running old strips would have caused a sharp dip in circulation. "But the important thing," he points out, "is that nothing that Herriman didn't draw ever ran in a newspaper."

Herriman, he also notes, "was the cartoonist's cartoonist, and was never appreciated enough outside his circle of his fellow artists. This may very well be the case—after all, they didn't have sophisticated readership surveys in those days—but I know of no other strip which has garnered so much intellectual praise."

The distinguished critic, Gilbert Seldes, in his landmark 1926 examination of American popular culture, *Seven Lively Arts*, delivered this paen to the strip: "Krazy Kat, the daily comic strip of George Herriman is, to me, the most amusing and fantastic and satisfactory work of art produced in America today. With those who hold that a comic strip cannot be a work of art, I shall not traffic. Mr. Herriman, working in a despised medium, without an atom of pretentiousness, is day after day, producing something essentially fine."

Seldes noted that the strip managed to escape serious critical attention until the advent of a ballet based on it (music by John Alden Carpenter) in 1933 "brought it a tardy and grudging acclaim." For his part, Seldes feels that while Carpenter's ballet tried to recreate

the fantasy world of Krazy and Ignatz Mouse and Offissa Pupp, the delicate irony of the strip eluded him. After all, this was no ordinary situation comedy, this Krazy Kat scenario! Offissa Pupp is very un-doglike in his feelings for Krazy, but Krazy remains—well, crazy—about Ignatz. However, Ignatz can only respond with blunted passion: he gets his rocks off, to use a very contemporary expression, when he can "kreeze" that Kat's bean with a brick "from the brickyard of Kolin Kelly." Yet each brick received to the head merely reinforces Krazy's affection span—also reinforcing the psychological premise that any attention is better than no attention at all. (A modern variant: say what you will of me but spell my name right.) "I'll snip," purr-purrs Krazy as another brick to the head reminds him that Ignatz is not far away—indeed, is well within brick range. For not only is Krazy temporarily blinded by brick damage, he is permanently blinded by love. And it is Ignatz's fate never to realize this, never to comprehend what his brick means to Krazy. His brick always hits its target, but there is never any triumph in his unerring aim. He may be the realist in this affair, but it is Krazy who receives first our affection, and then our admiration for his/her (it was never clear about his androgynous creature) faulty to vision of a happier and saner world, where katz and mice might well play in love and harmony.

Speaking of the moment in Carpenter's ballet when Krazy gets hit with the inevitable brick, Seldes set forth this remarkable challenge: "As Mr. Bolm danced it one felt only the triumph of Ignatz, one did not feel the grand leaping up of

Krazy's heart, the fulfillment of desire, as the brick fell upon him. The irony was missing. And it was a mistake for Bolm to try it, since it isn't Russian ballet Krazy requires: one man only can do it right, and I appeal to him to absent himself from felicity awhile, and though he do it but once, though but a small number of people see it, to pay tribute to his one compeer in America, to the one creation equalling his own—I mean, of course, Charlie Chaplin. He has been urged to do many things hostile to his nature; here is one thing he was destined to do."

In his essay, Seldes concludes by praising Krazy Kat as a strip "rich with something we have too little of—fantasy. It is wise with pitying irony; it has delicacy, sensitiveness, and an unearthly beauty." Twenty years later, E.E. Cummings, in an introduction to a hard cover collection of Herriman's strip, noted that Seldes' piece celebrated the strip "so wheely, so

Krazy, temporarily blinded by brick damage, is permanently blinded by love.

For its time and for quite some time, *Krazy Kat* was the best comic strip this country has seen. Will we ever see its like again?

lovingly, so joyously that receding Krazy would be like teaching penguins to fly." So, in poetic flight from that stance, Cummings himself dashes off into the wilderness of metaphor. He finds in the strip a "meteoric burlesk melodrama of democracy that is a struggle between society (Offissa Pupp) and the individual (Ignatz Mouse) over an ideal (Krazy)—a struggle from which, again and again and again, emerges one stupendous fact: namely, that the ideal of democracy fulfills herself only if, and whenever, society fails to suppress the individual.

"Could anything possibly be clearer?" Herriman, alas, was no longer around to address himself to the question, but Cummings' metaphorical generosity toward the strip was sure to ruffle some intellectual feathers, and indeed it did so. Robert Warshaw, an astute critic of popular culture, didn't dispute that Krazy Kat was "perhaps the best that the comic strip has produced," but argued against the premise that the strip represented a "higher" development of the medium. In a piece entitled *Wooled with Dreams* published in *Parkette Review* in 1946, Warshaw took the position that comic strips weren't art because they aren't created with the high-minded dictates of art in mind. "In Krazy Kat, a very sweet-tempered fantasy," he wrote, "the



gap between mass culture and respectable [sic] culture manifests itself not in an open rejection of society, but, more indirectly, in a complete disregard of the standards of respectable art. Where no art is important, Krazy Kat is as real and important a work of art as any other—it is only supposed to divert the reader for two minutes at a time."

One might, of course, point out that a comic strip is designed to divert two minutes at a time every day of the year and for years on end, but I'm not here to state firmly whether or not Krazy Kat was high art. The subject of popular art qualifying as high art is the subject for another article, and for an opinionated (but of course definitive) answer, the editor of this publication need but ask me. However, what he seems to want to know just now is Krazy Kat's

ranking in comic stripdom. Was it a truly great strip? Or, more to the point, the greatest comic strip accomplishment to date?

I say, yes, verily, for a variety of reasons. All later day comic artists have to be measured against Herriman, for they all had his innovative genius as an example to draw upon. He eschewed traditional English—or American, if you will—and invented his own comic strip language. Gilbert Seldes describes it as "partly Dickens and partly Yiddish—and the rest is not to be identified, for it is Krazy." It is also phonetic—merely consider the cast of characters, in addition to the three principals: Dos Klyote, Walter Cephus Ausratig, Kristofer Kamel, Osker Wildest and Alec Kat, to name a few. And what's more, the language of the characters, in addition to being a phonetic treat, is a delight to read for both its lyric qualities and controlled wackiness.

Offissa Pupp (of Ignatz): "Hmmm. He does spend a pile of pennies for bricks—that's courage, in a way—tossing them is no weakling's job—Um-m—glory of a sort does seem to gleam about him a bit." (Sounds like Early Eugene O'Neill and not bad Early Eugene O'Neill.)

Krazy (after meeting a Chinese duck): "Them orniments, an' us accidents—neeva the trains will 'meat.'"

Ignatz (after Krazy admires a local "tide rupper walk"): "Yes, a





This was no ordinary situation comedy. Offbeat Papp is very un-doglike in his feelings for Krazy, but Krazy remains—a cat, crazy—about Ignatz, who responds with blunted passion and a brick to the head.

very clever funambulist."

Krazy (in response): "Toddin,' was that rismnakk a lengwidge—or wot?"

Ignatz (in riposte): "I said funambulist—a term better fitted to qualify so apt an artist—plain language, but on a higher plane."

No other strip, with the possible exception of Pogo, has used language so playfully, and no other strip—and no exceptions this time—represents so many successful experiments with the medium, and please recall that Herriman was

beautiful, was nourished by a wild freedom of arrangement," he wrote. "Backgrounds shifted without any reason but that of amusement, gaiety, irony [it also happened to be, 'damned good design']; a house could instantly become a tree, a church turn to a mushroom. The luscious Kat language was another of his four freedoms, for in addition to freedom of plot, background and color, freedom of speech was one of his most joyous contributions."

Waugh cites Herriman's "free-

dom despite the painterly use of colors in these weekend strips, and despite the joyous—and daring—use of language, Herriman's ability to create a fantasy world—a comic, yet phantasmagorical universe, if you will—in which we can co-exist those two minutes a day, was his loveliest gift to us. The plot, that apparently simplistic exchange of thrown bricks and love unresolved, was poetry and low comedy and wit and—yes, pretensions aside—not a little philosophy all wrapped up in a neat entertainment package which looked good—and read just fine—for over three decades.

For its time, and for quite some time, Krazy Kat was the best comic strip this country has seen.

Will we see its like again?

I think we have, with Pogo, and possibly with Peanuts—in terms of popular mythology, at least. But it will never be the same again, for we will never be so damned innocent again, and life will never presume to be so sweet again, and thus we can always treasure the bittersweet, yet cotton-candied fantasies of Krazy Kat and the year-round Lewis Carrolls of George Herriman.

And anyone who thinks George Herriman could be replaced in kind deserves, well, a brick to the head!



working in the second decade of this century.

Coulton Waugh, in his book on comic strips naturally heaps accolades on Krazy Kat—Indeed, no book on comic strips has failed to do so—and it is Waugh who perhaps has best summarized the extent of Herriman's achievements in this limited medium. "His sense of spotting and pattern, always

dom of plot," and Robert Warshaw would reply that "almost every day for more than thirty years, Ignatz hit Krazy with a brick," and perhaps between these two points of view lies the true measure of Herriman's accomplishment. Despite the shifting Sunday backgrounds, in which mountains grew balconies and battleships floated majestically across deserts,



AL JOLSON AND THE TALKIES

By Robert Stewart



Al Jolson, in his favorite pose for "go into your dance" about 1935.

"I never knew just exactly what I was going to say until I found myself in front of an audience," said Al Jolson in 1913. "Of course, I had the regular jokes and songs to fall back on if my brains gave out. If the audience liked me, I didn't care how far I went. If they didn't like me, I kept going further until they did." They not only liked him, they loved him.

"We want you! We want you!" screamed the Winter Garden audiences whenever Jolson walked to the edge of the stage and asked, "Listen, do you want me or do you want the show?" The rest of the cast would leave, and the man known as The World's Greatest Entertainer would take over. It was during moments like these that, in the words of Charlie Chaplin, "he personified the poetry of Broadway, its vitality and vulgarity, its aims and dreams."

He was born Asa Yoelson in Russia on May 26, 1886. At the age of seven he traveled to America

became a street singer, then a circus ballyhoo man, eventually performing in cafes, burlesque and vaudeville. In 1908 he joined Lew Dockstader's Minstrels, the last of the big-time blackface minstrel shows, and he made his Broadway debut in 1911 at the Winter Garden in Jerome Kern's *La Belle Paree*. For the next 20 years he was the King of Broadway, a master showman whose vibrant microphoneless voice brought audience after audience to their feet.

In an age of electric rock, it becomes difficult to remember that there was once a performer who was electric. But the word was used countless times by different writers who found "electric" the only adjective that could describe Jolson. What was the secret of rapport with audiences? "I spoke to them very softly, trying to win their confidence and their respect. This method didn't work at all. You have to be very careful in training an audience, because they are sensitive creatures and are

where his father was a cantor in a Washington, D.C., synagogue. Naturally, his father hoped young Asa would follow him as a singer in the synagogue. Instead, at the age of 13, he ran away from home,



In September, 1936, Al Jolson entertained combat troops during a ball in the Korean fighting [right]. "The pose" for Jolson was the same, whether he was in an army uniform, a Mexican scrape or in blackface. Below is a publicity shot of Jolson taken in 1930.



easily offended. Train them with gentleness if you can, but, if you can't, use a club. Make them realize mentally that they must do as you say, no matter how they feel. Look them square in the eye. Be firm with them, and they will sit up and eat out of your hands. After all, dangerous and cruel as an audience is, you are its superior."

In 1916 Jolson made his film debut in a silent Vitagraph short, later commenting, "I'm no good if I can't sing." In 1923, at the insistence of D.W. Griffith, Jolson began work on *Mammy's Boy*. After seeing the rushes, Jolson became convinced that the film would be detrimental to his stage career. "I am not worried about any lawsuit because I have signed nothing," Griffith did sue, and Jolson was ordered by the court to pay \$2,627 in damages.

Sound in motion pictures was nothing new. Many different systems had surfaced during the Silent Era. All had exotic sounding names, and all were considered minor novelties. The Edison Kinetophone, invented October 6, 1886, was followed by the Photocinematophone (1906) and the Synchronoscope. Edison also experimented with the Cameraphone (1910). Hamanuva Talking Pic-



*A fervent moment in drama was transposed to the after screen when Jolson made *The Jazz Singer*. The film premiered on October 6, 1927 to a tremendous reception. Within two years every studio had switched to talking films leaving 94 outlaws.*

tures (1910) had live actors speaking behind the screen, an idea still in use today in Thailand. Webb's Electrical Pictures (1914) presented vaudeville, minstrels and opera, and the Phonokinema was used by D.W. Griffith to provide 200 feet of dialogue for his 1921 film *Dream Street*.

There could be no acceptable sound in motion pictures until two problems were solved: synchronization and amplification. When Lee De Forest invented the audion tube in 1907, amplification became possible. The development of the oscilloscope after World War I led to synchronized sound on film, and

De Forest used this principle when he exhibited the first Phonofilms at the Rivoli on April 15, 1925. These shorts featured such vaudeville stars as Eddie Cantor and Eubie Blake. According to the writer Les Kaye, Jolson was paid \$10,000 by De Forest in 1925 to sing one song for the Phonofilm process.

Better documented is Jolson's October 7, 1926, sound debut, singing from the screen of the Colony Theatre in a one-reel Vitaphone short titled *Al Jolson in a Plantation Act*. The Colony audiences were treated to Jolson renditions of "April Showers," "Rock-A-Bye Your Baby" and

"When the Red, Red Robin Comes Bob-Bob-Bobbin' Along," all delivered from a Southern cotton plantation cabin set. This short was filmed at the Manhattan Opera House which the Warner Brothers had leased for Vitaphone recording experiments. Accompanied offscreen by Al Goodman's Orchestra, Jolson sang and spoke directly to the audience.

Darryl F. Zanuck remembered, "Sam Warner was responsible for sound coming into pictures against the violent protests of Harry Warner." The possibility of bankruptcy meant the Warner Brothers had to do something. Sam Warner

saw Western Electric's sound-on-disc Vitaphone system as the answer. What would happen if George Jessel recreated his long-run Broadway hit, *The Jazz Singer*, as a feature film with songs? As noted by Russ Jones in the January *Nostalgia Illustrated*, Jessel signed a contract for \$30,000 but asked for \$10,000 more after learning the film would have Vitaphone sound. When Jack Warner agreed but would not put the extra amount in writing, Jessel said, "The deal's off."

At this point, Jack Warner made a screen test of Buster Collier Jr. in the part but vetoed him because "he had a voice like a tired spook." He next approached Eddie Cantor who declined because of his belief that Jessel was the only entertainer who could do the role. Finally, Warner thought of Jolson and learned he was in Denver with the road show of *Big Boy*. A Warner Brothers executive, Morrie Safier, coincidentally in Denver at the same time, went backstage and asked Jolson to name a figure. Jolson asked for \$75,000, more than double the amount originally offered Jessel. Warner Brothers agreed.

The *Big Boy* company's special train—four Pullmans, a diner, Jolson's private car and three baggage cars—arrived in Los Angeles on May 23, 1927. During *Big Boy*'s three week run at the Biltmore Theatre, Jolson, Jack Warner and Zanuck finalized plans for *The Jazz Singer*. A test was made of Jolson singing the Jewish hymn "Kol Nidre." When Jolson saw this test, he became convinced for the first time that films were not going to hurt his career.

Silent scenes in *The Jazz Singer* were filmed at the old Vitagraph studios; work on the songs took place at the newly constructed Sunset Boulevard soundstages. The interior of the Winter Garden theater was a reconstruction based on photographs, but then Jolson suggested using the real thing. Jack Warner saw the publicity value of a trip east and agreed. A sign went up on the Winter Garden: **WARNER BROTHERS PICTURES, INC. WILL SHOOT SCENES TODAY OF THE NEW YORK WINTER GARDEN FOR THEIR FORTHCOMING PRODUCTION, AL JOLSON IN THE**

JAZZ SINGER. A huge crowd appeared, and the cameras rolled. Surrounded by the throng as he was leaving the theater, Jolson announced, "If you crush me to death, I won't be able to sing for you." He then gave an impromptu street performance, answering requests, and finally shouting out, "Look, folks! You know, I could go on like this for hours, but we all had a hard day. Besides, we're tying up traffic. Suppose we call it a night, and you all come back in a few months and see yourself in the picture!"

The cast and crew returned to California where a similar incident occurred. Word spread throughout Warners that Jolson was scheduled

to sing on a cabaret set. When Jack Warner learned that the Jolson set was filling up with cast and crews from other films, he decided to declare a holiday. "Tell everybody we'll hold up the scene until they get here, and they can hear Al sing. The set is packed, but we'll make room for more." Seven productions went idle while Jolson sang. The next day, Warner told reporters, "That little holiday cost so much I haven't even figured it out yet, and I don't want to. If you ask me what I thought it was worth, though, I wouldn't be able to give you a rough estimate of all the happiness it gave. You should have seen their faces! It was like they were hypnotized. If he can just get half as



Jolson "personified the poetry of Broadway, its vitality and vulgarity, its aims and dreams," said another showbusiness great, Charlie Chaplin.



Opposite page: Mr. & Mrs. Al Jolson (the former Ruby Keeler) in 1928. Top left and bottom are scenes from *The Jazz Singer*. Top right is from Jolson's second talkie, *The Singing Fool*.

much into the picture, we've got a hit."

Sam Warner, who supervised the song recording, listened to a playback of "Blue Skies" in which Jolson had ad libbed to his mother (Eugenie Besserer), "Did you like that, Mama? I'm glad of it. I'd rather please you than anybody I know of." Suddenly, Sam Warner realized that there was no reason why the film couldn't have spoken dialogue as well as songs. He immediately had Al Cohn, who had written the screenplay, come up with 250 words of dialogue. Warner's decision changed the course of film history, but he never lived to see the audience response to spoken dialogue. Exhausted from work on the film, Sam Warner died of a cerebral hemorrhage 24 hours before the premiere at New York's Warner Theatre on October 6, 1927.

Each Jolson song received a thundering ovation from the



premiere audience. When the lights went up, Jolson spoke from the stage, stating that he could not stop the tears. He expressed an appreciation of Vitaphone, and added, "They had a hard time holding me back. I'm peppy, and I took it big. Some of the time I tried to do an Emil Jannings."

Mordaunt Hall's review in *The New York Times* the next day noted, "In the expression of song the Vitaphone vitalizes the production enormously. The dialogue is not so effective, for it does not always catch the nuances of speech or inflections of the voice so that one is not aware of the mechanical features." Despite the reservations of certain critics, the film went on to gross \$3,500,000, and Jolson's second talkie, *The Singing Fool* (1928) set a box-office record which remained unbroken until *Gone With the Wind* was released a decade later.

Within two years after *The Jazz Singer* every studio had switched to talking films, involving 94 different systems. Over 4000 theaters were wired for sound, and movie attendance doubled to reach a total of 95,000,000 admissions a week. Jolson's overwhelming personal magnetism and ability to sell a song by creating an emotional intimacy with his audience had sold an entire technology.



EASTER PARADE

Once a simple promenade for New York's elite, the Easter Parade has burgeoned into an institution, where rich and poor alike show off their latest finery.





If you think of parades in the traditional sense of the word, then New York's traditional Easter Parade hardly fits that definition. There are no brightly-colored floats, no marching bands, no civic or ethnic groups proclaiming their heritage. The Easter Parade most probably had its origins as a sort of neighborhood social event. Many of the churches along Fifth Avenue ended their services at the same time, and the massive out-pouring of the various congregations along that fashionable thoroughfare formed a throng so great that it resembled a parade by anyone's estimation. The first Easter Paraders were the elite of New York's Social Register. Because the Fifth Avenue area was—and still is—the city's wealthiest enclave, one could see numerous Vanderbilts, Astors, Whitneys and other representatives of America's aristocracy promenading in their Easter finery to meet their friends. The society pages soon discovered this custom and cameras began snapping away at all the famous faces. Fashion editors also got wind of this trend and, since the affluent were the ones who bought the latest Paris ensembles, took this all fresco society stroll to be an index of what everyone would be wearing that spring. But you didn't need a pedigree to march in the Easter Parade, and soon those of more modest means

were showing off their new spring outfits on Fifth Avenue, hoping to get their pictures in the rotogravure. Not only did they dress in the conventional fashions of the time, but some would also appear in the most outlandish attire they could think of, hopefully to attract a bit of attention. The object, after all, was to be seen. The pictures on these pages are good indications of what everyone was being seen in, over the years. The picture on page 32 is one of the earlier Easter Parades in 1899. The balcony of the Windsor Hotel provided a perfect vantage point to watch the festivities. The early 1900s are represented on page 33. Knickers, cutaways, top hats and parasols were some of the fashions that were de rigueur for strolling down the Avenue. On the next page, the low-slung look topped off with a cloche hat typified women's fashions in the 1920's, while a fur stole, complete with paws, head and tail of the animal in question, worn with a tailored suit, was the latest style in the '30s. On page 34 is an example of the "new look" that rocked the fashion industry in the late '40s,



From Alice-blue gowns to blue jeans, this traditional rite of spring continues to be an unerring indicator of the fashion fads and follies throughout the years.



while a group of women below model the latest in Easter chapeaux of 1959. At right is the boldly innovative (for 1965) Courrèges outfit, with white "go-go" boots, and just a hint of the mini-skirt that was to characterize the late 60s. The past few years have seen a preponderance of denim with nary a hat in sight, but the pendulum seems to be swinging away from the casual look and back to dressiness. Even the venerable Easter bonnet, which was immortalized in a song, seems to be making a comeback. And, more than any edict of Paris, Seventh Avenue or other self-proclaimed emperor of women's fashion, the Easter Parade has been and will continue to be the real barometer of what styles are "in."



RACING BIKES OF THE 20S

By Rick Cobb

The Great War was over and manufacturers were racing to turn out their newly engineered motorcycles. Foremost among them was the 247cc Levis.

Dateline 1920: The crowd jumped to its feet. Was it possible that the first three places in the famous Isle of Man race had been won by three of the same motorcycles?! When the dust cleared, it was evident that three black machines had done the impossible. The motorcycle—a Levis 247cc.

The Great War was over and companies were racing to turn out their newly engineered cycles.

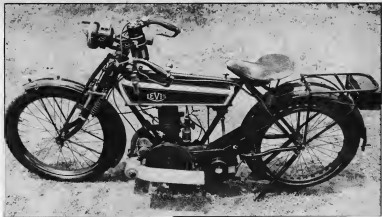
In England, where a majority of motorcycle manufacturers set up shop, a small works named Butterfields Ltd. in Birmingham was offering their latest model of the Levis. Levis, from the Latin word "light" had previously been suc-

cessful with their 350cc vertical twin in 1912 and with another flat stroke twin in 1914, but now fierce competition after the war was forcing them to produce an updated model.

The Levis new special SSK model had been rigorously tested for three years before it was offered to the public and the company was



The Levis 247cc SSK racing bike was the best of its kind during the 1920s. Used for street touring as well as racing, the Levis gained instant popularity after it placed first, second and third in England's famous Isle of Man race in 1920.



The 1922 model of the Levi 247cc SSK is still a classic racing bike, as these details show. From clockwise: Rear view shows gear shift and oil pump; leather "saddlebag" tool pouch; carbide headlamp; magneto and gearshift positioning



During the 1920s, it seemed as if Britain was swept with a wave of motorcycle fever. There was fierce competition among manufacturers to make faster, more durable models. At right is the first motorcycle complete with side car for family touring. The fact that this contraption was powered by coal gas explains its unwieldy appearance. Below is a typical scene on an English country road in the 20s; a dusty but happy couple taking a summer jaunt on Portsmouth Road.



Tuned up and in good running condition, the 1922 Levis was capable of attaining a maximum speed of 50 miles per hour on flat roads.



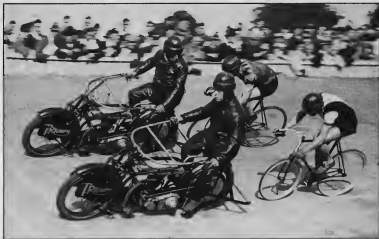
optimistic. The public was also enthusiastic, after the bike's shattering victory in the Isle of Man motorcycle race. Race results confirmed the Levis potential when its 247cc SSK placed 1-2-3 in the 250cc class. After the race, Butterfield's couldn't supply enough machines.

The next year the same bike took second, and in 1922 it was back on top beating all competitors.

The 1922 version pictured (p. 60) is a 247cc SSK model with a two stroke engine and sporting a two speed gear box. It has a "chain-cum-belt-drive" system which was popular on most British bikes at that time. This means a chain drive from the engine to the gear box and a leather belt drive from the gear box to the rear wheel. The machine had a manual spring loaded oil pump in which a plunger had to be depressed at varied intervals to lubricate the engine. The speed determined the amount of lubrication necessary. At an average speed of 30mph the plunger was depressed until oil filled the sight tube. This amount of oil was usually good for about 20 minutes running

Motorcycle races were the newest 20th spectator sport, as evidenced by this dirt-track race near Paris. Below, a driver takes a bad spill as his bike overturns.





Photographed while racing along at full speed are drivers Southall and Wylde, followed by a team of conventional bikes.

time. All bearings were made from phosphorus bronze to wear longer.

A conventional magneto was standard equipment together with a B & B carburetor which had separate air and fuel controls for accurate mixing.

An efficient Lucas carbide lamp served as the headlight. Water in the top would drip on the carbide below to produce the light. If you wanted more light, one simply dripped the water faster.

The Levis used a leather rim brake in the front wheel and a

large leather piece connected to the drive belt acting as the rear brake. Its wheel base is 58 inches with Dunlop 24 x 2½ tires.

The frame was made from tube steel with only two springs mounted in the front end acting as the shock absorbers. The gas tank holds a maximum of 1½ gallons with an oil capacity of 3 pints.

Tuned up and in good running condition the 1922 Levis was guaranteed a maximum speed of 50 mph on flat roads.

Levis motorcycles achieved re-

cognition in the racing world throughout the 20's and into the 30's when they began production of the 250cc overhead cam single. The Butterfield company continued making motorcycles until the late 30's, when it was forced to go into machine parts production for the war effort.

Although the company never resumed production of their successful motorcycle, the Levis still remains a valuable classic sought after by collectors around the world.



One of the reasons for the success of the Levis was its frame, made of a lightweight tubular steel with only two shock absorbers.

WILLIE DIXON: BLUES CATALYST

By Linda Solomon

The man who writes them also sings them; Willie's voice pumps out the grits and groceries with a style that separates the blues men from the blue boys.

His songs have been recorded by Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Chuck Berry, the Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, The Norman Luboff Choir, Al Kooper, Otis Redding, Ten Years After, Eric Clapton, Rick Nelson, Stephenwolf, Dr. John, Mike Bloomfield, Paul Butterfield, The Doors, and Johnny Winter—and that's only a partial list. He is to the blues what Lenny Bruce was to black comedy—most people think he wrote the book.

Try these titles on for size: "The Seventh Son," "I'm Your Hoochie Coochie Man," "I Just Want To Make Love To You," "The Little Red Rooster," "My Babe," "You Can't Judge A Book By Its Cover," and "Wang Dang Doodle." These seven songs alone were cut by—among others, Mose Allison, Bo Diddley, Sam Cooke, Peggy Lee, Johnny Rivers, Nina Simone, the Rolling Stones, Peter, Paul and Mary, Elvis Presley, the Pointer Sisters, Little Walter, and Nancy Wilson.

The man who writes them also sings them, as well or better than many of his interpreters. He opens his generous mouth and out comes a booming *basso profundo* not quite so resonant as his bass fiddle, but individual enough to convey his earthy dispatches with wit and wisdom. Willie's voice pumps out the grits and groceries with a distinction that separates the blues men from the blue boys.



His booming basso voice is almost as resonant as his bass fiddle.

Willie released *Catalyst*, his latest album, on Ovation, an independent *quad* label quietly gaining recognition for producing quality blues and jazz. His new label seems to have inspired a fresh attitude, and Willie has tossed in a surprise on *Catalyst*, a deep-voiced narrative number, "God's Gift To Man." A departure from his not-so-standard blues rockers, this semi-recitation depicts a depth of character which dips fervently into the philosophy of Love, revealing yet another facet of this man on whom there seems to be no limit of self-expression.

Catalyst was preceded by Willie Dixon's *Peace?*, an off-beat offer-

ing on Willie's own Yambo Records, primarily a singles label. The album was based around a "peace" motif, and the cover exhibited brightly exciting artwork unlike most contemporary blues albums—which *Peace?* was not. Unfortunately, Yambo, although long on talent, is short on distribution, and many persons who might have been intrigued enough to acquire the disc one way or another were either ignorant of its existence or simply gave up trying to find it in the record bins.

Catalyst has fared better than *I Am The Blues*, which Willie released nearly four years ago on Columbia. That album, although it included "Back Door Man," "I Ain't Superstitious," "Spoonful," and six more Dixon classics, was gussied up with chirping lady backup singers and lotta brass. Presumably, Columbia thought "da blooze" would sell better that way, but blues fans had more taste than they were given credit for. People waited for a more representative album from this definitive bluesman. They got it with *Catalyst*.

Not content to rest on his song-writing or recording laurels, Dixon takes his steadfast band, The Chicago Blues Stars, on tour with him all over the U.S., Canada, and Europe. (A quickie tour of Australia and New Zealand scheduled for March of this year was cancelled due to problems related

to the energy crisis.)

They played Kenny's Castaways in Manhattan twice within the last months of 1973, returning in March '74 for another engagement at the club, which has become an important showcase for blues artists. There is a burgeoning appreciation for blues and "roots" in New York City, and in February last year, Willie and his band shared the billing at a New Audiences concert at Fishermen's Hall in Lincoln Center with Bo Diddley and Lightnin' Hopkins. Willie and his band earned a standing ovation.

There are many, many Willie Dixon songs, but the man himself is relatively unique. At 300 pounds, he is literally one of the Big Daddys of the blues. He weighed 12 pounds when he was born.

"I'm still a pretty good-sized baby," he laughed. He's six foot two, and has been dieting for the past two years, bringing his weight down from 378 pounds. He eats one meal a day, plus the odd piece of fruit, and takes one-a-day vitamins. "I've had this weight a long time," he admits. "If I fool around gettin' too much exercise with the bass, I lose weight. My friends won't know who I am!"

(He's joking, of course. It isn't likely that Willie will ever turn into a toothpick, but even if he trimmed himself reed-thin, he'd still stand out in a crowd and be recognizable by the size and expressiveness of his hands. The only other person with hands like that I can think of is another one-of-a-kind person who also happens to be a musician, Charles Mingus.)

Born in Vicksburg, Mississippi (he's a Cancer), Willie moved to Chicago at the age of 11 to live with a sister, returning to Vicksburg for a few years before finally settling in Chicago permanently. One of 13 brothers and sisters, Willie made it to eighth grade, working and going to school at the same time.

"When I came to Chicago after I left school, I just kept on studying. Oh yes, I studied quite a bit. No, I didn't get the high school degree, but I have no doubt about qualifying. I'm sure I can pass any high school test."

He gave the matter some thought and mused, "After a certain length of time and after



continuously experiencing things, naturally, you've got to gain (knowledge). I had a long time to gain—just like my kid, now. One of my daughters has finished school and is going to the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas."

"I have 14 kids." Amazed, I muttered, "Fourteen—legal?" Willie replied, "Are you kiddin'? I support 'em all. They might be legal—yeah, they're with the same lady, my second wife."

Willie's initial try at matrimony was unsuccessful. "Yeah, she called Aggie, my bass fiddle, my 'starvation box'—At that particular time, she couldn't have given it a better name, because that's exactly what was happening!"

The year was 1944, and Willie was washing dishes for \$7.50 a day, with his meals thrown in (as he put it). One night, his wife parked his belongings in a trunk outside the door, and he left for good. That was the one and only time he ever pawned the bass.

Dixon's bass fiddle is like a physical extension of his body. It

A family picture shows Willie as a baby in his mother's arms. Below is Willie, Memphis Slim and Arveto. Opposite page: The Four Jumps of Joe at El Casino, Chicago.



"Blues change like the rest of the world changes. As the world advances, so do ideas, and so do the blues. After all, you are writing about people."



goes where he goes, and it could be argued that he takes better care of it than he does of himself, although that's debatable. I had heard that his bass had once been broken during a nightclub fight.

"Broken in the fight?" he asked, misunderstanding. "Who told you about that? I did?" he said dubiously. "I told you about the time the bass got broken in a fight?"

"It was on Madison Street near Ashland (Chicago), during the War. We was playin' in this club, and we had this little Eye-talian girl singin' with our little four-piece band. A bunch of sailors came in and tried to take the girl off the stage.

"Was it a racist thing, a white girl singing with a black band? During the War, I guess it would have been. Well, we had a nice thing goin' all the time. She had been playing with the group a while. So some wise guy came and snatched her off the stage—and we snatched her back.

"This guy was a sailor, and he

went out and came back with—why, man, he must have had the whole Navy! And they walk into this joint and start a fight.

"Well, somebody put out the lights, and that was it. I had the bass fiddle, swingin' it like mad, fightin' with it. I was tryin' to keep the guys off the stage, and I was doin' a good job. The rest of the guys in the band had got behind the piano and was all down on the floor, and I'm standin' there fightin'.

"I tore up the whole bass fiddle with the neck of the bass in my hand and some strings, ya know, but I busted the whole bottom out of the doggone thing. And, um, all of a sudden, they're crowdin' me. So I decided I'm goin' back behind the piano.

"And in the dark, the guys in the band didn't know who in the hell I am or nuthin', and this guy took his saxophone and bent it across my nose. My face was all swell' up, and both of my eyes. I couldn't see out of one eye, and my nose was bleedin' on one side. Sure, it was

broken!

"They was layin' everybody out, putting them in the paddy wagon. A friend of mine was on the (police) force at the time. He was a drummer who used to play with me. There was this big knob on my nose, and he said, 'What the heck you doin' over here?' So I'm runnin' down the alley, and then I went on home. I think they find everybody, about five or ten guys (sailors). Naw, they didn't bust the band.

"We were back to work the next night. No, we didn't have to pay. The sailors had to pay the damages. The MPs got 'em. The club didn't lose anything.

"I don't even go over that way anymore. That's on the West side, and I live on the South side. I go through there occasionally, but I never pay attention anymore. I used to think of it every time I passed by it.

"The bass fiddle I have now, I paid about \$450 for it. I think they used to be more expensive than

(Continued on page 74)

THE COWBOYS

By Bette Martin

From William S. Hart to Roy Rogers, the Western hero gave us the special thrill of knowing, after all was said and done, the good guys always win.



The venerable John Wayne as he appeared in John Ford's *Stagecoach* (left) and in the *Three Mesquiteers*.

JOHN WAYNE

America's most famous and best loved star of Westerns, John Wayne has enjoyed a career which spans more than 40 years and includes some of the most famous Westerns ever made.

Born in Winterset, Iowa, John's family moved to California when he was still young. While studying at the University of Southern

California, he began working in the prop department at Fox, where he met director John Ford, with whom he was later to team and make some of his most successful films.

He made his way up the ranks of cowboy stars, moving from studio to studio and from B-pictures to serials to features, leaving his real name, Marion Morrison, far behind him.

Amid the hundreds of standard Westerns he made, standouts are John Ford's *Stagecoach*, *She Wore A Yellow Ribbon*, and *Rio Grand*. Wayne also starred in many successful non-Westerns; notably *The Quiet Man*, a touching story and *The High And The Mighty*. Over the years, he's built a large following that has made him the most successful star in screen history by box office standards.

WILLIAM S. HART

Raised in the West, the most famous silent Western star appeared on Broadway in Western stage classics such as *The Squaw Man* and in Shakespearean plays as well. He soon put the Bard behind him to star in such western favorites as *The Gun Fighter* and *Tumbleweeds*, among numerous others. Hart often helped to write his scripts, and also utilized his stage experience when he directed many of his own films.



As a star in Westerns, Hart gave the screen some of its most colorful and best loved portraits.



Tim McCoy, it was said, was the only movie cow boy who could carry on a conversation in the Indian sign language.



TIM MCCOY

Colonel Tim McCoy's career began as an Indian agent, and he made his movie debut with a role in *The Thundering Herd*. He went on to become one of the most popular stars of Westerns, making a number of films at MCM and later joining *The Rough Riders* for their very successful series of pictures, working with the equally famous Buck Jones.

BUCK JONES

Buck Jones, one of the Western stars who was actually born on a ranch, came to movies via the Wild West shows in which he was a stunt rider. He

doubled for stars like Tom Mix and William S. Hart before establishing his own career, starring in both Westerns and features. He is best known for his Rough Riders series. He died in 1942.



*Buck Jones followed in the footsteps of William S. Hart and Tom Mix. Below is a scene from *Stranger From Arizona*.*



TOM MIX

Born in 1881, the famous Tom Mix was the movies' first Western superhero. A veteran of the Spanish-American war, he worked as a Texas Ranger and a Rodeo rider before his acting debut. Once in films, he made hundreds of features and serials, many of which he wrote, produced and directed. Mix died in 1940, leaving behind a legacy of classics enjoyed by fans and film students alike.



With his horse Tony, Tom Mix made many thrilling westerns.



Hoot's first audible western was The Long, Long Trail for Universal.



HOOT GIBSON

Like many of the Western stars of his era, Hoot Gibson first displayed his ability to handle a gun and his skill as a horseman in Wild West Shows that toured the country. Somewhat more boyish looking than some of those who rode the screen range, he soon found his own place and his own following as a top star, making both the popular short films and longer features that entertained matinee audiences for decades.



FRED THOMPSON

Fred Thompson's Westerns gave audiences plenty of excitement for their money—Fred outvalued Tom Mix in the number of action scenes in each of

his pictures, and nearly matched Mix in popularity.

A firm believer in screen realism, he did his stunts himself, thereby allowing the camera to record angles that made him the authentic Western hero—his young fans looked

Thompson did all his own stunt work and was Mix's closest rival.



to find. Flashy dressing was another Thompson trademark, and nearly all his garments featured elaborate trimming and ornamentation, combining the pageantry and fantasy of the wild west show with the authenticity of the real west.

JIMMY WAKELY

Westerns, through the years, were extremely competitive, and when any innovation was discovered to lure audiences to the box office, it was widely imitated. The arrival of the Singing Cowboy was no exception, and as the most successful of the breed, Gene Autry set the pattern others tried to follow—some, like

Jimmy Wakely, with moderate success.

Just as Autry had his own series of movies at Republic studios, the masters of the Western film at the time, Wakely, who was dressed in the Autry manner and who sang in the Autry style, had his series at Monogram. But there was only one original—and at best, Wakely was an imitator.



Jimmy Wakely sang his way through Monogram Pictures' Gun Runner.



Maynard was a star with Ringling Brothers' before appearing in films.



George (Superman) Reeves and Andy Clyde are with Hoppy at left. Above is scene from Rinegate Trail.

HOPALONG CASSIDY

When William Boyd made the first Hopalong Cassidy Western in 1935, not even his studio realized that he was creating what would become one of the most successful and popular series of films, both in movie theatres and later on television.

At first, Boyd's stunts were all done by doubles, but in time he grew more comfortable with action work and did much of the falling and trick riding himself.

The Hopalong Cassidy series continued from 1935 through the 1940s, and with the 50s, it made the move to television with great success.



KEN MAYNARD

Before becoming a star in his own right, Ken Maynard had a small role in one of Buck Jones' films. When at last he became a star of his own Western series, Maynard's popularity rapidly grew—the result of admiration for his riding talent and for the outstanding action scenes which were the main characteristics of his pictures.

Like Fred Thompson, Maynard rarely used a double for his stunts, lending authenticity to his roles. His trademark was his stunts on horseback, and although he was not as successful at acting as he was at riding, he made both silents and talkies.



Tex Ritter was almost as popular as a singer as he was a movie star. Below right he is seen with actress Rita Hayworth.

TEX RITTER

One of the most popular stars of his day, Tex Ritter rode into fame when studios were rushing out as much footage as possible, vigorously competing with one another for audiences. What Tex's pictures lacked in scripts and plot, they made up for with plenty of action, music and the numerous chase scenes that his audiences delighted in time and time again.





The most famous of all the singing cow boys, Gene Autry's smooth offbeat voice made him interesting. He is seen above with Lon Chaney, Jr.

GENE AUTRY

The singing cowboy was personified in Gene Autry—a likeable radio star who combined a following of Western music lovers and Western action film fans into his movie audience.

Tumbling Tumbleweeds was Gene's first Western starring role, and he went on to win a wide public for his "modern" approach to the west.



ROY ROGERS

Roy Rogers took the idea of the musical Western and enlarged on it, turning it into a showcase for his musical family. Dale Evans, who became Roy's wife, was always the leading lady, and the Sons of the Pioneers were the chorus for the many songs Rogers' films featured, and even Trigger could be counted on to tap a hoof now and then.

Roy and Dale have had a successful recording career, and were among the Western film stars to make profitable and popular transitions to television.

In recent years, Dale has written several inspirational books, and Roy has devoted much of his time to the diverse Rogers business interests.



Roy Rogers with Trigger, above left, and with his wife Dale Evans.



THE CONTINUING SAGA OF NANCY DREW

By Linda Solomon

Remaining an eternal 16-18 for the past 45 years,
Nancy doesn't get older— she gets better

Nancy Drew, All-American girl detective, seems to have been around forever. Ask anyone, male or female, grown or still growing, if they read the Nancy Drew books and you're guaranteed to get a shock of recognition, a smile, and, usually, a knowing nod. Forty-five years and 51 titles have passed since Nancy's first caper and she's still going strong.

Over 50 million of the Nancy Drew series books have been sold and there are foreign translations in 17 languages. New volumes are released yearly and publishers Grosset & Dunlap acknowledge sales of 150,000 copies each for the yearlings, which sell for \$1.75 in hard cover without dust jackets.

The books are the leading juvenile series in the United States and the best-selling foreign juvenile series in France. They're also big in Britain, Italy, Denmark, Holland, Norway, Finland, Germany, Belgium, Portugal and Iceland. Nancy undergoes name changes; in the French edition she is "Alice Roy," and becomes "Kitty" for the Swedish, "Susanne Langen" in the German and "Neite" in the Finnish editions.

To track down the continuing saga of Nancy's success we must first recognize the popularity of series books and mystery stories in the moppet market. Most series books are written for children from seven to twelve years of age,

although Grosset gives ages 10 to 15 for Nancy's primarily female readership, which puts Nancy's followers in the teeny-bopper market. Although it's hard to fathom 14-year-old teen queens boning up on Nancy Drew while queuing for tickets to, say, an Elton John concert facts are facts and Nancy's abundant fan mail attests to that age bracket.

Series books are distinguished by the same principal characters in every story, which makes it easier for young readers to relate to and identify with them, fast-moving plots, easily decipherable details and plenty of action. And don't forget the happy ending, because that's a necessity! The Good Guys are bright-eyed but not bushy-tailed, wholesome and resourceful, right-thinking and clean of mind and deed. When you do the Nancy Drews you can always identify the Heavies because they are bad-mannered, mean and nasty, and have names or nicknames like "Red Quint" (squisht?), "Al Saiggs" (pigs?), "Shorty," "Spike" or "Diamond."

The Bad Guys always look the part. Their clothes range—depending on how classy they are, from checkered zoot suits and elevator shoes (no platforms then!) to fancier threads, spats and gloves. But the Uglies always have some visible physical oddity like a long nose, shifty eyes, a missing middle finger or a limp. Their command



of the English language is short on grammatical syntax and awkward, but to the point, and they often send Nancy blunt and scary anonymous letters of warning and possible malice, or requests for money in exchange for information or items sought by Nancy and her friends.

Real violence is minimal, although Nancy is frequently assaulted, usually by a dull-edged instrument, just as she makes a major discovery, and everything is blotted out by instant blackness. She also gets buried in mountain caves, struck by lightning, is flung down flights of stairs and suffers other assorted fates equally suited for *The Perils of Pauline*. Undaunted, she shakes herself to make sure nothing's broken and jumps back once more into the fray, eager to bag the culprit who tried to do her in.

Sex is verboten. Nancy's perennial boyfriend, Ned Nickerson, is usually around when she needs him



ENIGMO SUCCEEDED IN HOLDING BACK GEORGE AND BESS, BUT NANCY WIGGLED FROM HIS GRASP.
The Secret of Red Gus Farm

No Nancy Drew story is complete without Nancy's falling into the clutches of the villain, whose fiendish plans to shut her up for good are inevitably foiled.

but he's only allowed to look, not touch. Ned is an Emerson College football jock with a heart of gold ever waiting to be melted by Nancy, but he's a Good Guy so he never persists beyond an occasional verbal suggestion softly delivered in a romantic, moonlit setting— which Mr. Drew promptly dismisses while blushing to her unpolished fingertips. He knows her smarts are better than his, yet maybe he figures she'll come around some day.

But she never will, because not only is sexual intimacy frowned upon, marriage is also out of the question. Nancy's pen-mother, Mrs. Harriet S. Adams, who writes under the pseudonym Carolyn Keene, instructs her ghost writers never to marry off a character because once this happened, and

readership declined. That was not germane to the Nancy Drew series, but Mrs. Drew—one of the first truly liberated girl-anythings, will remain virtuous and untouched by male human hands (except for unfortunate clouts to the back of her head.)

The first Nancy Drew was published in 1930 and a revised edition of this, *The Secret Of The Old Clock*, was issued in 1958. Mrs. Adams' father, Edward Stratemeyer, a former dime novelist who gave the Bobbey Twins to an enormously receptive kiddie audience in 1906, eventually formed the Stratemeyer Syndicate in East Orange, N.J., hired his own ghost writers and subsequently produced more than 700 books for boys and girls before he passed on in 1930. He wrote the first three

Nancy Drews and his daughter, Wellesley graduate Mrs. Adams, took over the series and has since rewritten 30 of the early books as well as adding a new volume every year, the latest being *The Mystery Of The Glistening Eye*, a kidnapping job with an unlikely victim, none other than Nancy's Good Guy, sly Ned Nickerson!

Kidnapping (which currently brings the death penalty or a life sentence in this country) occurs in nearly every book in some form or another. Usually it is Nancy who gets spirited away, bound, gagged, and temporarily abandoned. A devilishly tongue-in-cheek parody of the Nancy-nappings surfaced in

Real violence is minimal, although Nancy is frequently assaulted, usually by a dull-edged instrument, just as she makes a major discovery.

the October '74 *National Lampoon*, and the Stratemeyer people were understandably upset. Dubbed "The Case Of The Missing Heinies," writer Doug Kenney's hilarious but thoroughly off-putting treatment of "Nancy's" pursuit of Patty Heart and her S.I.A. cohorts didn't miss a trick but was overloaded with racial overtones and bitchy character shuns on Nancy and her doting daddy, "the noted

attorney Carson Drew" drew and quartered Kenney, adding "notable criminalist mowpiece" of the oppressor class. Ned and N.D. regulars Bess Marvin and Hannah Gruen also came in for their share of barbs.

Hannah Gruen is Nancy's surrogate mother. Left motherless at the tender age of three, Nancy is looked after by "sweet-looking, motherly" Mrs. Gruen, who cooks,

cleans and keeps her place most of the time while serving as a respectable member of the working-class who knows better than to come between Nancy's independent nature or the overindulgent relationship between Nancy and her father. She provides simple fare and "safe" advice and sometimes cuts her finger in the kitchen or is given some other attention-getting device to let us know she's there for



As this close inside cover illustration shows, Mrs. Drew could, by persistent sleuthing, effortlessly outfox, expose and bring to justice the most hardened of criminals, while catching wits with the most seasoned of police officers, never losing her femininity for one minute. These qualities make her the first truly liberated heroine.

the count. In the more recent books, however, I've been informed that "real affection (missing in the early books) "has developed between Nancy and the housekeeper, and that "Nancy and her father now have a delightful camaraderie."

That might mean more dialogue and less distance between Nancy and Mr. Drew, because he could hardly be much more generous to his talented offspring, who already possesses mental and physical qualities above the norm. Through paternal munificence Nancy also has pretty (but not trendy) clothes, her own checking account, access to Mr. Drew's travel agent and her own car, which she can maneuver with all the skills of a racing driver.

Nancy's a veritable whizz kid. She doesn't get older—she's been 16-18 for 45 years—she gets better as the books are updated to express a more contemporary outlook. Nancy and her world is still an inspiration to young girls because she exemplifies a vaguely realistic success factor with which adolescent girls can identify, a fantasy

Nancy Drew then and now. *The Secret Of The Old Clock* (below) is the first of the series, written in 1930. The plot concerns a helpless victim swindled out of an inheritance. *The Mystery Of The Glowing Eye* (left) is one of her more recent adventures. Here, the crooks are kidnappers and the victim is Nancy's boyfriend Ned.



NANCY DREW MYSTERY STORIES
**THE SECRET
 OF THE
 FORGOTTEN CITY**
 by CAROLYN KEENE

Nancy's later adventures are set in more exotic locations than the earlier books, where Nancy rarely strayed from the vicinity of River Heights. Extensive research is done on every foreign location to give the stories greater authenticity and local color.



life that doesn't glitter, but sparkles with adventure not so terribly far from the realm of possibility.

Nancy could never mature into television's zesty "Rhoda" Morgenstern. She's too laid-back, too coolly efficient and basically far too conservative a young lady for such a far-out scene. Nancy is motivated by reason rather than passion, although she exudes warmth to those in her immediate circle. Peers find her peerless and normally aloof adult figures such as police or others in authoritative or "service" positions respect her and address her almost with reverence. Her physical attributes are good but not great. While Nancy has a debutante's classic well-scrubbed looks, it's her good deeds and healthy aura that people notice. She'll always be a nice girl, a proper girl; not one of the roving kind.

No N.D. would be complete without Nancy's alter-egos, cousins Bess Marvin and George Fayne, although George (a girl whose stalwart disposition but bumbling ineptitude makes her appear accident-prone) mysteriously escaped the *Lasspoo*'s harpoon.

Any hint of sex is verboten. Nancy's perennial boyfriend Ned never persists beyond an occasional verbal suggestion, which Ms. Drew promptly dismisses.

Bess is inevitably described as a "pretty, slightly plump blonde" with a penchant for rich foods and frilly clothes and a "feminine" (sic) fear of crawling objects and eerie places. Bess and George inevitably accompany Ms. Nancy on her escapades, which often include an enviable amount of travel to near or even exotic, far-away places like Turkey, East Africa, Peru, France, Scotland, Hong Kong, Canada or Hawaii.

To make the foreign locales seem authentic Mrs. Adams and her staff do extensive research, which is transferred to Nancy, who always knows before she gets there where to seek out intellectually stimulating local color. Scientific information and police procedure have also been brought up to present-day standards. Today's stories are also more complex, with a plot and a sub-plot, where the originals had only the theme with no variations.

Despite her wanderlust Nancy will never be a peripatetic Shirley



Writing under the pen name of Carolyn Keene, Mrs. Harriet S. Aulons (top, right) took over the series from her father in 1930. One of the reasons for the continuing success of the series is the updating of the books through the years. Gone are the racial stereotypes of the past, and Nancy has long traded in her "mashie sports car."



MacLaine type although the series' profit-making turned on Warner Brothers, and they found the general idea of Nancy's adventures strong enough to make four films with Bonita Cranville in the title role. Those were *The Hidden Staircase* (1938), a spinoff of the second book in the series, *Nancy Drew, Detective* (1938), *Nancy Drew, Reporter* (1939) and *Nancy Drew, Trouble Shooter* (1939). The last three scripts were evidently conjured up by studio hack writers and resulted in poor box office, which cancelled out the film series.

Nancy, her friends, Mrs. Cruen and even Carson Drew have served up *The Nancy Drew Cookbook*, published in 1973 and written, of course, by "Carolyn Keene." Although James Bond would easily defeat Nancy in the recipes category the cookbook has proved extremely successful. It is simple to comprehend, often amusing, and contains, as the subtitle admits, many "Clues to Good Cooking." Nancy Drew fans are lapping up copies like gingerbread. And that's what's new with Nancy Drew!



YE OLDE VENDING MACHINES

By Penny Nicolai

It all began about 10 years ago when Harold Adler was looking for an unusual present for his daughter. After much searching, he decided on an old vending machine from the 30s. Taking it home, he dismantled it, made it work and was hooked.

"It's not so much the machine that gets me," Adler explained with a chuckle, "I just like to take things apart, fix them and then go on to the next one."

This rather strange outlook has prompted Adler to have one of the largest collections of vending machines in the United States. However, they are all for sale. He buys them, repairs them and then sets them on shelves to await sales.

History tells us that vending machines were around since the time of Christ. "You deposited a coin," smiles Adler, "and got a drink of something."

In this country they have been in use since about 1860 and enjoyed a real heyday between 1920 and 1940.

The early vending machines such as the "Ham and Bacon" were known as Trade Stimulators. Placed on counters in the local meat market or butcher shop, tickets were dispensed to customers during the week. When Saturday night rolled around, a drawing was held and the lucky winner presented with a ham or slab of bacon.



Swille's Sam, *The Peasant Man*—1925

The same type of machine was also popular in cigar stores. There was no way to lose, but you definitely could be a winner. You deposited a nickel and were always assured of one cigar. But, if number two came up, you got two cigars, and so on.

Adler's oldest machine dates back to 1860. It is made of wood and in those days was mounted on a post outside the market. For a penny you received a stick of gum. Machines that dispensed gum balls, jelly beans and peanuts didn't come into fashion until the 1900's. Penny candy was sold over the

counter by the scoop.

When Adler first began buying and fixing these curiosities, he combined them into his daily business—pool tables. As a bonus for a purchase, he threw in an old gumball machine. But pretty soon customers began to ask why they had to buy a pool table to get a machine. After all, you can only fit so many pool tables into the house, but machines are a different story.

Today, Adler has some 400 coin operated machines. "Mantiques" as his business is known, still makes and sells pool tables, but you would hardly know it from entering his showroom at 820 South Hoover Street in Los Angeles, California. Every nook and cranny is filled with machines.

It is a mess, to be sure, but a very profitable one. As Adler travels around the country buying parts for his pool tables, he always manages time to rescue ancient machines from barns, cellars, attics or dark corners. In many cases the owners have long since failed to see any value in those pieces of "junk."

Many of the machines were used for gambling in the 20's. In fact, so strong was the fever, that people killed each other over the local gum ball machine.

As gambling was illegal, vending machine companies looked for ways to stay on the right side of the

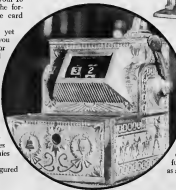
law. The line was very fine and they were able to get away with it for some time.

One of the major dodges was to use codes. Fortune machines were a good example. A card would spew forth saying something like "You will have 10 lucky days beginning today." Perfectly innocent. Definitely, until you turned your card in and were paid your 10 nickels. Another was for the fortune to be peeled off the card revealing a number.

Gumball machines were yet another dodge. Of course you were getting something for your money. How could that be considered gambling? Easy. Some machines dispensed balls with holes in them and the holes contained pieces of paper with prizes written on them. Others paid depending on the color of the gum. It really wasn't unusual to see people standing in front of these machines all day long, putting in pennies and throwing out the gum.

When manufacturers figured

out that people were more interested in the hunt than the kill, as it were, they began making machines more interesting. Companies tried to outdo each other and creativity ran wild. In short, vending machines became works of art. One manufactured in 1900 consists of a bronze bull's head. Upon deposit of a coin and a pull on the



cast iron or oak, their parts were hand-made. However, as is the way with all things, as time passed and machines became more and more in demand, sheet metal began to be used and then aluminum.

Adler's collection continually varies in numbers. At the moment he has over 400 machines ranging in price from \$25 up into the thousands. Uncle Sam is one of the more valuable... a full sized figure, Uncle Sam acts as a strength tester and was found

Clockwise from top: 3-Jacks—1930; Old and Young Linda, a fortune telling machine—date unknown; Uncle Sam Handshake—1898; The Partisan Bell—1920.

horns, the ball breathed perfume into a handkerchief.

However, not all machines were used as trade stimulators or gambling devices. Machines such as "Electricity is Life" had an entirely different function. Placed on store counters, these machines enjoyed the reputation of being a cure-all. Something akin to Uncle John's Snake Oil. You put in your penny, grabbed the handle and pulled the knob. The result... an electric shock guaranteed to make you feel better.

All of these machines were magnificently crafted. Made of



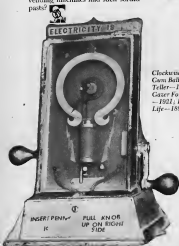
in arcades. This particular machine is very rare and dates way back to 1898.

Another one of the more popular ones is "Smilin Sam from Alabama." A full-sized black head, Sam served as a peanut vendor in and around 1825. A coin, a pull of the tongue and your hand was filled with salted nuts. During this, same period there was also a Chinaman peanut vendor and a clown.

Collections vary greatly. One California man has a collection of just a few machines worth well over \$20,000. The highest value put on any machine thus far is \$10,000. A lot for a vending machine that used to be given to the stores for free.

Poker machines were popular among the gamblers as were baseball and roulette machines. In short, it boils down to the fact that anything which paid off was popular.

Today these machines are illegal. No longer do people stand in front of gumball machines tossing away the gum and looking for the prizes. But thank goodness for someone like Harold Adler, who is around to give us a glimpse into the past. And would you have guessed that vending machines had such sordid pasts?



Clockwise from top: Cam Ball Fortune Teller—1915; Crystal Gazer Fortune Teller—1921; Electricity in Life—1898



SOME PRIVATE EYES

By Russ Jones

Tracing back the history of the hard-bitten, cynical private eye, one finds the roots firmly grounded in the popular works of Dashiell Hammett.



The *Maltese Falcon*, Hammett's best seller, became a classic film with Bogart, Peter Lorre and Sidney Greenstreet.

DASHIELL HAMMETT

In the 30s and 40s the private eye reigned supreme both in the pulp magazines and in hard-cover editions. But when Hollywood got into the act, something happened. And that something for the most part was not good.

Tracing back the history of the hard-bitten, cynical private eye, one discovers that the roots of the genre were perhaps grounded in the popular works of Dashiell Hammett who created the legendary character of Sam Spade as well

as the high living Nick and Nora Charles.

The Maltese Falcon, one of the Sam Spade books, was a best seller for Hammett, and Warner Brothers' seeing the potential as a movie for the book, produced their first version of the tale in 1931. The first "Falcon" starred Ricardo Cortez as the redoubtable Sam Spade and Bebe Daniels as the mysterious, pathological Miss Wonderly. The film was not a great success, however.

Warners was not one to give up on a good property, though, and a

new version was filmed in 1936—this time with the title of *Satan Met a Lady* and starring Bette Davis and Warren William. Again the film was doomed for the cinema wastelands.

In 1941 *The Maltese Falcon* returned, but this time it returned on wings of pure gold. John Huston had always liked the story, and chose it for his directorial debut. The team of Humphrey Bogart and Mary Astor set the screen ablaze. The film was Bogey's second big break in Hollywood. (Both happened in 1941. His first was the

role of killer-on-the-run Roy Earle in *High Sierra* after George Raft, Edward G. Robinson, James Cagney and Paul Muni turned down the role. George Raft also turned down the role of Spade in *Falcon*.) The 1941 version presented Sidney Greenstreet in his motion picture debut at the age of 63.

The dialogue of Huston's *Falcon* followed Hammett's snappy style, and the scenes with Greenstreet and Peter Lorre are regarded by some film historians as classic. One can say that the 1941 *Falcon* is, to this day, the definitive private eye film.

In his booklet, "On Crime Writing," written for the Capra Chapbook series, Ross MacDonald—the currently most esteemed writer of detective fiction—has expressed this view of Hammett and Raymond Chandler: "Hammett was the first American writer to use the detective story for the purpose of a major novelist, to present a vision, blazing if disenchanting, of our lives. Sam Spade

was the product and reflection of a mind which was not at home in Zion, or in Zenith. Chandler's version is disenchanting, too, but in spite of its hallucinated brilliance of detail it lacks the tragic unity of Hammett's."



RAYMOND CHANDLER

Very little is known about Raymond Chandler's early life. He worked with a large oil company until the time of the Depression, but whether he quit or was fired is uncertain. It is also known that Chandler lived with his mother until he was 36 years old. Shortly after his mother's death, the author married a woman many years his senior. It is strange that so little is known of Chandler's early years; it is as if he covered his background as carefully as he plotted his stories. It is amazing that, to this day, no one who knew Chandler during those years has ever written so much as one word on the subject. In a way, Raymond Chandler was reborn in 1939 with the publication of *The Big Sleep*.

The Big Sleep was an astonishing piece of writing. Chandler's skill in conveying atmosphere, especially of a claustrophobic kind, is apparent in the very first chapter when Marlowe takes on an assignment from old General Sternwood.



Raymond Chandler (above) authored *The Big Sleep*, which starred, in the movie version, Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall. It was scripted by William Faulkner, Leigh Brackett and Jules Furthman. It was reported that too many writers spoiled the plot.

Chandler had great skill in conveying atmosphere, especially of the claustrophobic kind, and his dialogue fizzles with excitement and black humor.



Farley Granger and Robert Vaughn starred in the suspense filled, *Strangers On A Train* which was scripted by Raymond Chandler in collaboration; Chandler had written for ten years before receiving a movie writing contract.



The Blue Dahlia starred Alan Ladd and Veronica Lake. The film still holds up, but is creaky in many places and the dialogue that worked so well in the books and stories sounds rather glib and trite when spoken by actors.

in an overheated, orchid-filled greenhouse, where the plants smell "as overpowering as boiling alcohol under a blanket." And the dialogue fairly fizzes with excitement and black humor. One exchange in particular shows how perfectly Chandler honed and timed his jokes. Marlowe has been reluctantly forced to bash a girl on the head, the kind of girl who always picks the wrong man and inevitably gets left on the sidelines. "Did I hurt your head much?" he asks solicitously. She replies: "You and every other man I've ever met."

The *Big Sleep* didn't exactly make Chandler famous, but the next three books in the next four years did. They all had the same quality: crackling dialogue, shaky plotting ("I do my plotting in my head as I go along, and usually I do it wrong and have to do it all over again"), tremendous pace and

excitement—and, of course, Marlowe, the slightly shabby man of integrity moving through the corrupt California scene. Marlowe had charge of Los Angeles; Sam Spade watched over San Francisco.

Chandler is fun to quote. In just about every story there are at least a dozen lines one will remember. Like: "She wasn't scared—she was paralyzed." Or: "I kept watching the guy on the floor looking deader and deader and deader."

The film version of *The Big Sleep* also starred Bogart. It was scripted by William Faulkner, Leigh Brackett and Jules Furthman. It was reported that when the picture was completed, none of the writers knew what the hell it was all about. The film does get a bit swampy but Howard Hawks' direction pulls it off. A lot of Chandler's snappy dialogue stayed

intact. When General Sternwood asks if Marlowe met his youngest daughter, Bogart answers: "Yeah, she tried to sit in my lap when I was standing up."

(*The Big Sleep* was edited by Chris Nyby, who science fiction fans will recall went on to direct the "classic" *The Thing*.)

Chandler went to Hollywood to work. He became, as he put it, not rich but far from poor. Noting that he would have to pay \$50,000 in income taxes for 1945, he observed: "This is pretty awful for a chap who was gnawing old shoes not too many years ago." He never talked in detail about those days.

Chandler went on to script such films as *The Blue Dahlia*, *Double Indemnity* and *Strangers on a Train*. The two later scripts were done in collaboration. The *Blue Dahlia* starred Alan Ladd and Veronica Lake. The film still holds up,

The 40s were big for the private eyes. They weren't seen in the movies that much, but the pulps and radio shows were swarming with them.



Robert Altman gave the Marlowe legend a try in 1972 with *The Long Goodbye* which starred Elliott Gould. What was most notable about the film was that the script was by Leigh Brackett. Overall the film does not measure up.

but is creaky in many places and the dialogue that worked so well in his books and stories sounds glib and at times trite when mouthed by actors.

The 40s were big for the private eye. They weren't seen in the movies that much, but the pulps, paperbacks and radio shows were swarming with them.

Howard Duff was Sam Spade as well as Marlowe via the airwaves.

In the late 50s Phillip Marlowe made it to television. The show lasted for only one season however. It came in the wake of the private eye shows such as *77 Sunset Strip*, *Hosacraft Eye*, *Richard Diamond*.

Marlowe was played by Phil Cary, who did an adequate job, but setting Chandler's hard-bitten detective in the 50s did not make it. Marlowe was very much a product of a generation before, and the slick private eye with tons of

money and a fancy car was the new image.

The movies gave Marlowe another try in 1969, with James Garner in the title role. It was based on Chandler's *The Little Sister*. Garner tried to follow in the tradition of Bogart, Dick Powell, and Robert Montgomery as the world-weary detective. But Garner played it light, and the script was on the border line of being incoherent. It was definitely not the Marlowe we had known and loved.

Robert Altman gave the Marlowe legend a try in 1972 with *The Long Goodbye* which starred Elliott Gould. After several previews the film was sent back for a re-edit. It never got a break distribution wise. What is notable about *The Long Goodbye* is that it was scripted by Leigh Brackett, who co-wrote the screenplay for *The Big Sleep*. Overall, the picture

does not measure up to Altman's other films. The private eye of the 40s does not function in the 60s or 70s.

Today, paperback editions of the Chandler and Hammett stories are doing very well, and revivals of *The Big Sleep* and *The Maltese Falcon* always pack them in, even though both films appear on television with planned regularity.

It should be noted here that a new (rather different) version of *The Maltese Falcon* is before the cameras now. This time Sam Spade is being played by George Segal. It will be interesting to see how the fourth version of the classic Hammett tale fares, since when most people think of Spade or Marlowe they see Bogart. It is strange to note however, that Raymond Chandler pictured him as Cary Grant. I guess Hollywood never saw it that way.



AVA GARDNER: VENUS DE HOLLYWOOD

By Walter H. Hogan

"Ava Gardner offers a vibrant sensuality that quivers with lust yet suggests a pathetic hunger, a well-disguised tenderness that go far beyond... clichés."

It takes one to know one, right? Or, in this case, takes two, those legendary ladies of film-dom: Elizabeth and Marlene.

Miss Taylor has said that, to her, the prototype of a beautiful woman is Ava Gardner. And when Miss Dietrich, starring at London's Cafe de Paris, asked Ava backstage because she wanted to meet her (earlier Ava had said, "Damn, I wish I had legs like that!" when Dietrich came on stage), they were introduced by David Hanna, film press agent and author of *Ava: A Portrait of a Star*, who wrote of their meeting: "Marlene looked at Ava, stretched out a hand and stroked her cheek. 'You are so beautiful.'"

That's like one Tiffany jewel calling another Tiffany jewel "a gem." And men the world over would agree. Alistair Cooke has called Ava "the most beautiful human being in the world." Leslie Halliwell, in *The Filmmaker's Companion*, succinctly describes Ava as "American leading lady, once voted the world's most beautiful woman."

And Earl Wilson reported in his column in *The New York Post* of Sept. 22, 1972, that he'd introduced Ava Gardner, sitting at the next table to the man he was interviewing, Francis Darwin, great grandson of Charles Darwin. "What a lady!" wrote Wilson. "Gracious in her chic reddish denims, she was happy to meet



Ava and George Raft played lovers in the film that really marked the beginning of her career—1945's *White Heat*.



him." Later, when Wilson asked Darwin what he thought of Ava, Darwin said: "It was wonderful to meet the highest specimen of the human species."

In his *I.E.*, *An Autobiography*, Mickey Rooney, then the nation's number one box office attraction and soon to be her first husband, writes of his meeting Ava: "Metro had just signed Ava and a publicity man was showing her around the lot. The year was 1940. Ava was dressed like a princess. I was dressed like a girl." (He was costumed as Carmen Miranda for a scene in *Babes on Broadway*.) Says Mickey: "When she appeared everything in me stopped. My heart. My breathing. My thinking. I was conservative in those days, it was all of five seconds before I told myself I had seen the girl I was going to marry."

And he added, "Like a thousand other girls, she had come west to crash Hollywood. Ava was unlike the thousand other pretty girls, because she was so much more than pretty. How did she look? Black hair, animal liteness, a face that bespoke both reserve and passion. How did Miss Ava Gardner look? Sleek and proud and tender and infinitely, infinitely feminine. Miss Ava Gardner looked like and was love."

Another Rooney comment: "At an early age, Ava must have discovered that her appearance gave her remarkable powers over men." He was 20 at the time; she was 18. But Ava possessed a beauty that, despite two facial accidents—the first at home in North Carolina when her sister unintentionally struck her under the right eye with a hoe when she was six; the second in Spain when she was trying the technique of *tarea a caballo* (fighting bulls on horseback), was thrown by her horse, and struck in the cheek by a charging bull—has lasted through the years. So much so that in an article called "Ava: Life in the Afternoon" in the May, 1967 issue of *Esquire*, Rex Reed wrote, "At 44, she is still one of the most beautiful women in the world." And in reviewing her most recent film, *Earthquake*, made when Ava was 51, two New York critics referred to her as "still beautiful" (Ann Guarino in *The Daily News*) and "looking magnificent" (Nora Sayre in *The New*



Ava's name became a household word after her performance in *The Killers* (1946) with Burt Lancaster.

COMMENTS BY GARDNER

"There are many places I could have lived. Italy. But those damned paparazzi! And then there is Honolulu, but they won't leave me alone there either. And Japan. I love Japan. But it seems there isn't a place on the globe where I can walk without being photographed, interviewed. And then there is London. London, they take three or four photographs when you arrive and then they forget you exist. I love London, the climate, the people."

"The only time I'm happy is when I'm doing absolutely nothing."

"I tramp around Europe, but I'm not giving up my citizenship, baby, for anybody."

"My sister Dee Dee can't understand why after all these years I can't bear to face a camera. But I never brought anything to this business and I have no respect for acting. Maybe if I had learned something it would be different. But I never did anything I am proud of. I didn't have the emotional make-up for acting and I hate exhibitionists anyway. And who the hell was there to help me or teach me that acting was anything else?"

"I've always loved to travel, to be a displaced person. I don't like to stay too long in the same place. I'm a gypsy, two suitcases and a ticket and I'm content."

Like a thousand other pretty girls, she went west to crash Hollywood; she was unlike the thousand others, however, because she was more than pretty.



In her first film with Clark Gable, Ava played a wine-cracking other girl in *The Hucksters* (1947). Below, Ava and Robert Walker were together in *One Touch of Venus* (1945).



York Times).

It was a picture of her youthful beauty that started what Ava told Reed was "this whole megillah." Ava had come to New York that summer of 1940 to look for a secretarial job and visit her sister Beatrice, nicknamed Bappie, who was married to a professional photographer, Larry Tarr. Tarr took pictures of her and displayed them in the window of a Fifth

Avenue shop where he worked. Barney Duhon, then a clerk in MGM's legal department, saw the pictures ("It was the face of the kind of girl you want to marry. It was vibrant—I mean vibrant!") and wanted to meet her. He phoned the shop; Bappie answered and told him Ava had returned to North Carolina. Duhon then asked for her pictures and said he'd show them to Marvin Schenck, in charge of talent. That did it: within a week Ava was back in New York City, this time for a screen test. But her accent was so Tarheel, so sugar and molasses that the test was a silent one. The MGM representative said he couldn't "send a sound track out to the Coast with nothing on it but vocal spoon-bread."

Charles Higham in *Ava* writes that "Al Altman, experienced test director, handled the job of making Ava look fairly presen-

table." His verdict: "She was hopeless."

Silas Sandler, an MGM publicist, said: "Maybe she looked hopeless when Al shot it. But when we ran the test—you never saw anything like it. She just took our collective breaths away. There wasn't a man there wouldn't have liked to take her to bed. Clumsy she may have been, talk she could not, and thank God the test was silent. But what a dame!"

The test went to Hollywood and George Sidney, who would later direct Ava in *Show Boat*, but was then choosing starlets for the studio. He said, "She was terrible . . . But there was something about her. That girl had a style, a way of moving, that seemed to come across. And of course her sex appeal was stunning."

Soon Ava was on her way to Hollywood, accompanied, at her mother's insistence, by Bappie.



Gregory Peck with Ava in *The Great Sinner* (1945). And with Ava again (right) in *The Snows of Kilimanjaro* (1952)

Bappie was chaperoning her baby sister whose \$75-a-week salary would eventually grow to \$17,500 per, although neither one would have guessed that then. Nor would they have known that Ava would eventually become the first Mrs. Mickey Rooney, the fifth Mrs. Artie Shaw, the second Mrs. Frank Sinatra, be strenuously courted by two famous Howards—Hughes and Duff—two famous bull-fighters—Mario Cabre and Luis Miguel Dominguín, and make the whole world her sound stage, doing films in Italy, Spain, Africa, England and Australia.

But first: there was another screen test, this time with sound. George Sidney, who directed it, could hardly understand a word she said. When Louis B. Mayer saw the test, he said: "She can't talk, she can't act, she's terrific." He said to turn her over to the voice coach and dramatic coach for a year's training, and then give her another test. Thus began the grooming of a star, a process that Ava thought was "absurd and perhaps just a touch disgusting."

"As a girl I was thrown out of high school plays," Ava has said. "I was never an actress." And throughout her career she has maintained that, though director Albert Lewin wrote the part of Pandora in *Pandora* and the *Flying Dutchman* especially for her and Ernest Hemingway personally asked Darryl Zanuck to cast her as

Cynthia in *The Snows of Kilimanjaro* (the role that launched her as a great international star). She was director Henry King's only choice for the role of Lady Brett in *The Sun Also Rises* and director John Huston flew to Madrid just to override her reluctance to play the part of Maxine in *Night of the Iguana*.

Said Huston: "There's nobody in the world who could play Maxine. She was—is—a very fine actress, though she thinks she's lousy. I knew she had that kind of random gallant, wild openness Maxine had along with the 'other side' of Ava, which is very 'close' and almost secretive."

In the prologue to his book about

Ava, Higham writes, "Her chief fascination is that she has always seemed to live her life right out there on the screen before our eyes. Her string of famous husbands and lovers, her drinking, her confessed self-destructive streak, her constant search for a man who can give her complete fulfillment as a woman have been echoed in her playing of such roles as Pandora in *Pandora* and the *Flying Dutchman*, the Barefoot Contessa, Lady Brett in Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, the hotel-keeper Maxine Falk in *Night of the Iguana*. Her broad, earthy humor, her constantly shifting moods of gaiety and depression, her harshness and kindness, her suspiciousness and

COMMENTS ON GARDNER

"She's a real movie queen. When she walks across a sound stage, she creates a sense of excitement, she stirs the pubes. It's as though she were 'born to the cloth,' she has that feeling of command, that control, that mark her down as an authentic star."

—George Cukor, director, *Bhowani Junction*

"Ava's a strange girl. Her moods are quick and eldient. You never can predict them."

—Joseph Mankiewicz, director, *The Barefoot Contessa*

"She was sensitive, subdued, at once tragic and adorable. She wanted to drink life down."

—Robert Graves, British poet

"She didn't want a fortune in the divorce. Compared to what other wives charged, Ava asked for a grubstake. After we were divorced, Ava seemed to be fond of me, and I loved Ava more than I ever had."

—Mickey Rooney, actor

"At an early age, Ava must have discovered that her appearance gave her remarkable powers over men. Ava Gardner looked like and was love."

openness have all been laid out for us in her playing. She is an actress without a mask. She is a beauty who has exposed her soul in her playing. She has surrendered her privacy; her courage deserves saluting for that."

Before the filming of *The Barefoot Contessa*, Ava said to writer-director Joseph L. Mankiewicz, "Hell, Joe, I'm not an actress, but I think I understand this girl. She's a lot like me." The role was that of Maria, a Spanish cafe dancer who becomes an international movie star. And the film began with her funeral.

Certainly death—or amnesia, a form of release from life's bonds—

plays as much a part as beauty itself in immortalizing females," writes Marjorie Rosen in *Popcorn Venus*. "For in death, woman—who is often feared in life—can be deified and worshipped."

"Ava Gardner would continue this syndrome on the screen, and her Ideal Fantasy Creature would in the late 40s be first an incarnation of a department store statue (*One Touch of Venus*, 1948). Then in *Pandora and the Flying Dutchman* (1951) she is again Everywoman, able to free the Flying Dutchman (James Mason), who is destined to sail his ghost ship into eternity unless he finds a woman who will love him enough to die for

him. Since their initial meeting is fated—Mason has already painted Pandora-Ava's portrait and is waiting patiently for her—the breathtaking Everywoman Pandora willingly, graciously complies with the rest. Then, in *The Barefoot Contessa*, she again varies this theme, playing an untouchable Succuba writhing in her own beauty, defenseless against love, yet unlucky. Finally she is murdered by her impotent husband for her infidelity—and he possesses her at last."

"Ava Gardner's combination of sensuality and aesthetic appeal, a presence that overwhelmed dramatic shortcomings," writes Molly



Ava was an Australian party girl in love with Gregory Peck in *On The Beach* (1959) filmed in Melbourne.

Haskell in *From Reverence to Rape*, "made her into something larger than life, too exotic to be an American woman, and as a result she was always playing half-castes (*Bhowani Junction*), outcasts (*The Barefoot Contessa*, *The Killers*), and revenant redeemers (*Pandora and the Flying Dutchman*)."

In *The MGM Stock Company*, James Robert Parish and Ronald L. Bowers say, "Ava Gardner bears the distinction of being MGM's final cinema Aphrodite," adding, "The mold never quite made a perfect fit and was broken by the actress' own volatile will and the beginning of the decline of MGM and the star system."

Before Ava's own star began to shine very brightly, there was at first the coaching, then a series of walk-ons and bits. Ava once told the Hollywood columnist, Adela Rogers St. John, "When I got my first walk-on, Mickey showed me how to walk, how to stand, what to do with my hands, how to ignore the camera. If I ever do anything big, I'll owe it to Mickey. Even though he didn't understand marriage, he sure as hell understood show business!"

FILMS OF AVA GARDNER

- 1942: *We Were Dancing*, *Joe Smith, American*, *This Time for Keeps*, *Kid Glove Killer*
- 1943: *Pilot No. 5*, *Hitler's Madman*, *Young Ideas*
- 1944: *Lost Angel*, *Swing Fever*, *Three Men in White*, *Maile Goes to Reno*
- 1945: *She Went to the Races*, *Whistle Stop*
- 1946: *The Killers*
- 1947: *The Hucksters*, *Singapore*
- 1948: *One Touch of Venus*, *The Great Sinner*
- 1949: *East Side, West Side*, *The Bride*
- 1950: *My Forbidden Past*
- 1951: *Pandora and the Flying Dutchman*, *Show Boat*
- 1952: *Lone Star*, *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*
- 1953: *Rode, Vaquero!*, *Mogambo*
- 1954: *Knights of the Round Table*, *The Barefoot Contessa*
- 1956: *Bhowani Junction*
- 1957: *The Little Hut*, *The Sun Also Rises*
- 1958: *The Naked Maja*, *On the Beach*
- 1960: *The Angel Wore Red*
- 1963: *55 Days at Peking*
- 1964: *Seven Days in May*, *Night of the Igwana*

It's been suggested, wrote Rooney, that Ava finally broke down and married him "because she saw in me not only a husband but a stepping-stone. I think the error here is a confusion between Ava as she is now, hard-living, hard-driving, and Ava as she was then, rather naive and unpossessed of fierce ambition."

Ava first received billing in *Three Men in White*, her first sizable role was in *Whistle Stop* in 1945, and her work in that brought her a good part in 1946's *The Killers*. And when producer Mark Hellinger told her the studio had approved her test, she said, "Oh, that's fantastic. And you know I have even better news. I just got a B-plus in an exam for English literature at UCLA!"

"Though she was not a natural actress," wrote Higham, "she at least had managed to give a solid, authoritative impression of a coming star, and she won the *Look* award as the most promising newcomer of 1947 as a result."

Another result: an offer from producer Arthur Hornblow, Jr. to co-star with Clark Gable and Deborah Kerr (in her first Hollywood film) in *The Hucksters*, because he "felt she would make a marvelous foil for Deborah. We were right."

Gable told Ava, "You don't see yourself as an actress and I don't see myself as an actor. That makes us even." Ava's performance in a magnificent comedy part made her a star. And Mal Vincent, in his article on her in *Filmus in Review*, June July, 1965, said:

"There are those who think Gardner could have become one of the screen's best comediennes had she not possessed the sultry beauty that made millions willing to pay to see her as the cold-blooded enchantress."

In '48 she starred in *One Touch of Venus*, and Bosley Crowther in *The New York Times* panned the picture but said, "It is true that Miss Gardner is pretty and has endowments of an uncelestial sort which the wolf-whistling writers and director are constantly pointing toward." Ava's Venus-type measurements: 36-20-36.

Ava first appeared in color in '51 in *Pandora and the Flying Dutchman*, which *Variety* called "an okay entry" for "the art house



Ava played a prostitute in *The Angel Wore Red* (1960.)

"Her chief fascination is that she has always seemed to live her life right out there on the screen before our eyes: an actress without a mask."

circle." In *The Herald Tribune*, Otis L. Guernsey wrote: "It goes without saying the photographs alluringly, but she is not equal to the complicated language and deep emotional currents of her role." In *Gods and Goddesses of the Movies*, John Kobal writes that Albert Lewin's "flamboyant direction may lack the authority with which Cocteau trod similar ground, but his images are consistently beautiful, and sometimes even a poetic moment is allowed to flash across the screen, even if it is only the kinetic poetry of Ava Gardner's gestures as she emerges from the sea."

Also in '51, Ava played Julie in *Show Boat*, though the studio heads were against it. Even Hedda Hopper and Louella Parsons got into the act, phoning director George Sidney and begging him not to cast her. But Sidney was determined. "I knew she would be Julie," he said. "She was a 'second best' girl, she felt that, and she had a terrific inferiority complex. I knew that Helen Morgan had had the same sense of insecurity. And, then, Ava was a Southern girl; she had a lilting accent that suited Julie perfectly. Ava went back to her North Carolina voice, and it was almost beautiful." She recorded the songs, half-singing, half-speaking them, "and it was deeply moving," said Sidney. Even so, her songs were dubbed in by a professional singer (was Ava upset!) but the studio used her voice on the recordings.

The next year, on May 22, Ava did that famous hand-and-foot cement ceremony at Grauman's Chinese Theatre. That year she did *Lone Star* with Gable and played the role of Cynthia in *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*. Of her performance, director King said, "No one else could have given it the sensitivity, the bruised quality, that Ava imparted to it."

Then in 1953 came what many consider to be Ava's finest performance, and it must have been a role she relished, for in 1932 as a 10-year-old in North Carolina she'd sneaked out to the movies to see *Red Dust* with Clark Gable,

Mary Astor and Jean Harlow. And here she was, with Gable and Grace Kelly doing the Harlow role in the remake called *Mogambo* (Swahili word for passion). One critic said that Ava's "capacity for comedy, under a director as skilled as John Ford, resembles Carole Lombard's." And there were other kudos. Crowther in the *Times* said "she easily steals the show." Galling the film "a jungle joyride," Guernsey in the *Herald Tribune* said Ava "has never looked better and she has never had a part that became her so well. Playing a New York beauty stranded in Africa by a maharajah, she makes the best of

things with a swing of the hip and a swig of the wine bottle—she is a wise guy who never screams when she sees wild beasts, two or four-footed. There are hardly any straight lines in her role... and she is as good at aiming a sarcasm as Gable is at aiming a rifle."

For her performance in *Mogambo*, she was nominated for an Oscar, but it was won that year by Audrey Hepburn for *Roman Holiday*. But she got one anyway: Just before the Awards were made, Sinatra sent her a chain with a miniature Oscar, and she wore it as a necklace for a long time. (That

(Continued on page 74)



She won critical kudos for her role in *Night of The Iguana*.

UPDATE

Since 1966, Ava Gardner has appeared in five films. In '86, John Huston directed her in *The Bible*; she was Sarah, the barren wife of Abraham, played by George C. Scott. The film was shot in Egypt, North Africa and Italy. Then in '88 she starred again with James Mason, Omar Sharif and Catherine Deneuve in *Mayerling*, playing the Empress Elizabeth of Austria. And she told a London reporter, William Hickey, that "if one has to play mothers, I guess there is no better way than this. And I stopped worrying about age a long time ago, honey."

In 1970 her friend Roddy McDowall directed her in a picture called *Tam-Lin*, later recast and shown as *The Devil's Widow*—shown briefly, that is.

The next year, Huston persuaded her to play the cameo role of Lily Langtry in *The Life and Times of Judge Roy Bean*, starring Paul Newman. She worked just three days and was paid \$50,000. "I was planning to go waterskiing in Acapulco anyway and it more than paid for the trip. So what the heck?"

And last year, she received second billing after Charlton Heston in *Earthquake*, directed by Mark Robson.

(Continued from page 10)

Mae's nipping at his financial heels, or by the audiences that wanted to nip at some other area of Mae's anatomy, he began to attack her: "Isn't it time Congress did something about Mae West?" he editorialized. By 1936 his venom was in full swing: "monster of lubricity," he called her, and "a menace to the Sacred Institution of the American Family." Hearst was not Mae's only enemy. With each new film censors got tougher, and Paramount got more nervous about Mae's glorious comic sexuality. (If only they could have heard her say, as she did on stage, "Are you packin' a rod, or are you just glad to see me?") But the films kept making money. *Go West Young Man* was 1937's first West epic, and in December of 1937 a second was to have its premiere, *Every Day's A Holiday*. But on December 18, 1937, Mae unintentionally redesigned the future of her Hollywood career. Five o'clock on a Sunday afternoon, The Edgar Bergen, Charlie McCarthy radio show. The airwaves weren't quite ready, especially in an era when many cities didn't allow movies—any movies—to be shown on Sunday. And when Mae, playing Eve to Don Ameche's Adam, drawled, "Would you, honey, like to try this apple sometime?" a lot of people in the audience assumed it wasn't her McIntosh that Miss West was offering her co-star.

Mae was black-listed from the radio networks. Paramount dropped her contract. Mae wasn't particularly worried. She had, after all, made a bundle. There was always Broadway. And Universal wanted her to do a comic western with W.C. Fields. It has become a classic: *My Little Chickadee*. As usual, Mae wound up in control. She wrote the screenplay after deciding that the original script was nothing but a "formula western with jokes added." And she managed to keep Fields off the sauce while they filmed together. It was the last movie Mae was in that satisfied her.

In 1943, for example, she appeared in *The Heat's On*, an Xavier Cugat trifle directed by colorful Hollywood character Gregory Ratoff. Mae hated the movie, joining critics and audiences in this appraisal. She was far happier with another product that bore her name during the Second World War: an inflatable life jacket named after Mae because of her seemingly pneumatic proportions. (In 1974, however, fashion authority Diana Vreeland, opening a show of Hollywood costumes at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, told a reporter, "Mae was never really that big. It was all done with corsets." So dies another cherished belief.)

Her career in Hollywood shot. Mae dusted off a script she'd written and hit Broadway in 1944 with *Catherine Was Great*, a play about the Empress of Russia whose sex life was as famous as her political acumen. Despite lukewarm reviews, Mae's presence managed to earn the show a seven month, money-making run in New

York, running for a year, and the producers were forced to refund more than \$200,000 in advance ticket sales when Mae could not continue the run.

By the mid-50s, Mae was up and slinking, headlining clubs in an act that featured 10 scantily clad muscle men and a star that was eligible for Social Security. But whatever her age, Mae hadn't cooled off a bit. Gossip columns reported that at least two of her muscle boys were in love with her. (When one of them, an ex-amateur Mr. Universe, started bad-mouthing Mae and her current beau, Mae fired him. Later Mickey Hargitay had to settle for marrying Jayne Mansfield.) Nightclub success followed nightclub success. At the Latin Quarter she broke her own house record, drawing \$100,000 in one week. In 1959, Mae sang "Baby It's Cold Outside" with Rock Hudson on the Oscar telecast; Mae got the reviews. In the mid-60s Mae recorded two best selling rock and roll albums, "Way Out West" and "Wild Christmas"; she was in

The Secret of That Distinctive Walk

It was during this period of Mae's extensive touring with Diamond Lil that Nightclub singer Sylwia Syms (who was touring with Mae in Lil) discovered the secret of la West's distinctive walk. Mae, tinier and shorter than she would have her audiences know, wore custom-made black, lace-up oxfords with rigid, four-inch platforms and insetting heels, forcing her to follow through with knee and hip as she took each step. To camouflage the shoes' utilitarian aspect Mae had "slip-covers" for the oxfords made to match each of her costumes.

York, and five months of packed houses on the road. The next year she rewrote a spy comedy into her sort of play and called it *Come On Up*. While it didn't make it to New York, Mae's credo brought the audiences in: "You must be good and tired," a character asks Mae; "No, just tired," she replied.

Not very tired, however. At the age of 56, when most actresses have settled comfortably, if unhappily, into playing mothers and aunts, or ax-murderesses and grotesques, Mae took *Diamond Lil* to London. It was a hit for eight months, and Mae brought the show back to New York where it played to a new generation of West devotees. Only the star's broken ankle kept it from

her 70s, and not about to stop.

Not even the legendary flop *Myra Breckinridge* could slow her down. She was virtually the only performer to come out of the wreckage with her reputation intact. Of the 78-year old star, the Washington Post said, "Myra's Debut is Mae's Coup." This August Mae will be 83, and one has no doubt that when she slithers up to blow out the candles on the cake in her all-white, satin hung Hollywood apartment, she'll turn to her current companion (male) and repeat, "It's not the men in my life, it's the life in my men." Lord knows, you could go a long way on the life still left in Mae West.



PROHIBITION

(Continued from page 13)

or cast-iron kettle, some copper coil, distilling apparatus, the raw material for your spirits (juniper berries, corn mash, whatever) and you're in business. Not only is this pastime fun for the entire family, but it will make you a huge conglomeration of new friends. However, it takes practice to make the mixings for a perfect cocktail, and your first few attempts might produce some bitter brews, that while not dangerous to humans could be absolutely fatal for your bath tub. But you'll soon improve with effort. If you do want to disguise the unusual taste of your home brew, you should have on hand a good assortment of fruit juices, syrups, sugar, and other delights to turn your home-made efforts into very fashionable "cocktails."

But if you harbor some fear that you might poison your friends and loved ones with your do-it-yourself concoctions, consider the benefits of an interesting vacation in a foreign country in the near future. Here is a perfect opportunity to try

4. THE ART OF SMUGGLING

Wondering where to go on your next vacation? Why not try Canada, home of ice hockey, moose, and booze? Yep, the stuff is legal there—just waiting for thirsty Americans like you to tote it over the border. In fact, the friendly neighbor to our north has, for some reason, never experienced such a boom in American tourism! What you must try to do once you're up there is get your hands on all the stuff you can, and, on your return to the States, stash it away so the guard at the border won't see it. A steamer trunk is a superb idea as it is equipped with a convenient false bottom. Other convenient methods of smuggling are large suitcases and baritone ukulele cases. But if you can't take the cold climate, it should be noted that the West Indies still puts out the best rum this side of Hoboken, N.J. Smuggle-and-stash tactics apply here the

same as they do up north, only in this case, it is known as "rum running." The only precaution to take here is to bear in mind that it is not a good idea to smuggle for profit, unless you want to annoy certain Chicagoans who don't like the idea of amateurs cutting in on their business. Take enough for yourself and your immediate circle of friends only. (Otherwise you just might end up as part of the foundation for the newest pier on Lake Michigan.) Then, of course, there's the perfectly legal Ocean Voyage Technique. Once you're 25 miles off American shores, you can booze it up as flagrantly as you please. In fact, you could even live on a houseboat 25 miles off shore—the "legal mile limit."

Can't afford to travel? Then why not try —

5. THE FOR-MEDICINAL-PURPOSES-ONLY PLOY

Your friendly neighborhood drug store can still supply you with all you need to drown your sorrows—either by producing a little something under the counter or giving it out by prescription. Yes, alcohol is legal if, for one reason or other, you must have the stuff in order to stay healthy. (After all, as we all know, nothing can cure a cough like a good shot of booze.) Even many patent medicines come complete with a built-in alcoholic content. And, of course, making your own "prescriptions" are painlessly simple: merely take a piece of plain white paper and scribble some thoroughly illegible lines across it. Most druggists will oblige you, however you might happen to get stuck with a rare straight-laced one who won't buy your interpretation.

There are a number of other ways to get around this annoying little statute, such as knowing your friendly neighborhood bootlegger, for example. In fact, if you believe the evidence of your own eyes, getting around Prohibition is rapidly becoming America's No. 1 national pastime, bringing out that good old American determination and inventiveness. Besides, what else could have enabled a poor kid from the streets of New York to become the Czar of Chicago and one of the great All-American success stories of our time?



THE LONGEST HITTING STREAK IN BASEBALL

(Continued from page 21)

sustained booing for its own pitcher.

When Joe came to bat in the seventh with the game tied, an instant hush fell over the Cleveland night. His confidence buoyed, Smith threw DiMaggio a low sweeping curve that broke toward Joe's knees. Once again Joe smashed it down to third, the kind of jump-up hit that usually handcuffs a fielder. But Keltner gloved it deftly and had the great arm necessary to throw Joe out from deep third.

A groan went up in the stands, as the fans realized that luck—always a factor—had deserted the seemingly indomitable DiMaggio. But there was still one more chance. The Yanks rallied in the 8th, and once again Joe came up, this time against relief pitcher Jim Bagby with two men on.

Sensing high drama, the crowd rose. Joe laced the ball through the infield toward second base. Off with the swing, shortstop Lou Boudreau crossed behind the bag just as the ball took a bad hop, bounding off his shoulder. He caught the carom, flipped the ball to his second baseman, who threw to first for a double play.

DiMaggio had finally been stopped—not by Feller or Newhouser or Thornton Lee, but by two relatively obscure pitchers, a veteran and a rookie.

Amazingly, the next day Joe launched another streak, this one running for 16 games. There was residual thunder in his bat and 1941 was his year—the year he set the one batting record that stands unchallenged.

Today, in an era when too many night games, the rigors of cross-continental travel and emphasis on relief specialists have led to anemic batting averages, the chances are minuscule that even the most talented hitter will approach—let alone supersede—the awesome 56-game hitting streak.



WILLIE DIXON

(Continued from page 43)

they are now. I've had work done on my bass a couple of times.

"When I first got it, we used to have a novelty act where I would ride the bass fiddle like it was a horse. I'd be slappin' it all along the sides. Then I used to lay back with it on the floor, and have the bottom up and play it like a guitar. There are a lotta ways I would clown with it when I was much younger, but... I don't feel like doin' it anymore. Yes, I could use it as kind of a novelty act, but I don't feel like goin' through this action stuff now."

It wasn't always that way. In his younger days, Willie was quite an athlete. "When I was a youngster, I played baseball. I used to think I was the greatest catcher in the world! And I could knock hell out of the ball, too, but I never got on any playing teams, just school teams."

"I used to box, wrastle, and play football, but only the boxing was professional. I won the Golden Gloves in 19-and-37 in Chicago under the name James Dixon—that's my middle name. I gave it up because I had manager trouble."

"They had it figured I was making one price, and I was really making another. And we got into a discussion in the Boxing Commissioner's office, and we came to blows! The office got fouled up and

the whole thing, and after that, that was it. I got expelled for six months, and that was my career. I went to playin' music then."

"I write mostly on the blues, and the blues, to me, have to be true. It's always more facts than fiction, because you have to write 'em from feelings and actual happenings of various things like life."

"Blues changes like the rest of the world changes. As the world advances, so do ideas, and so does the blues. After all, you are writing about people, and things that people would be interested in. And unless they're interested in them, you don't have a song."

"This is why I really believe that a lot of my tunes have turned into standard songs. I try to write about the things that are actually a part of my life. And this gives the average individual some parts of his own life that he thinks about, or some parts of his life that he would like to think about or experience. This makes it interesting."

In a field dominated by aging and sometimes decaying talents, crass youthful imitators, and crashing bores, Willie Dixon is, indeed, a catalyst of the highest order. If you have any desire (or a healthy curiosity) to seek the sources of some of this country's best blues songs, go hear Willie Dixon and his Blues Stars in person.

If he's not within playing distance, cop a copy of *Catalyst* and bring it on home to your turntable. Even if you're not susceptible to the blues, where he's coming from is either where you're going or where you've already been.

AVA GARDNER: VENUS DE HOLLYWOOD

(Continued from page 71)

year, Sinatra won the supporting role Oscar for his work in *From Here to Eternity*.)

In '54 producer Pandro S. Berman cast her as Guinevere in *Knights of the Round Table* because "it seemed more appropriate to use a beautiful woman than use someone who was a better actress but mightn't have the mass sex appeal Ava had by that time." *Knights* however was hardly a critical success.

Nor were, in the following years, such films as *The Little Hut*, *The Naked Maja*, *The Angel Wore Red*, and *55 Days at Peking*. But there were good films and good performances, too, in *On the Beach*, *Seven Days in May*, and *Night of the Iguana*.

In her review of *Seven Days in May* in the *Herald Tribune* Judith Crist said, "Ava Gardner is beautifully shapely as the ex-mistress." And in reviewing *Night of the Iguana*, Crist said, "Ava Gardner offers a vibrant sensuality that quivers with lust and yet suggests a pathetic hunger, a well-disguised tenderness that go far beyond the conventional heart-of-gold, easy-virtue clichés." Crowther in the *Times* said Ava was "the owner and mistress of the hotel, which she personally imbues with a raucous and blowsy decadence. Her loose-jointed sweeps around the premises, her howling gibes at the clattering guests and her free deportment with a couple of glistening beach boys does help to steam the atmosphere."

And the *New York Daily News* gave the picture four stars and said, "Ava Gardner, in the role that Bette Davis played magnificently on the stage, gives an exciting characterization of an earthy woman with a go-to-hell attitude toward life until sobered by the realization that she is needed by others not so strong."

Can the person who earned those reviews really, honestly say now, "I never was an actress?"

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